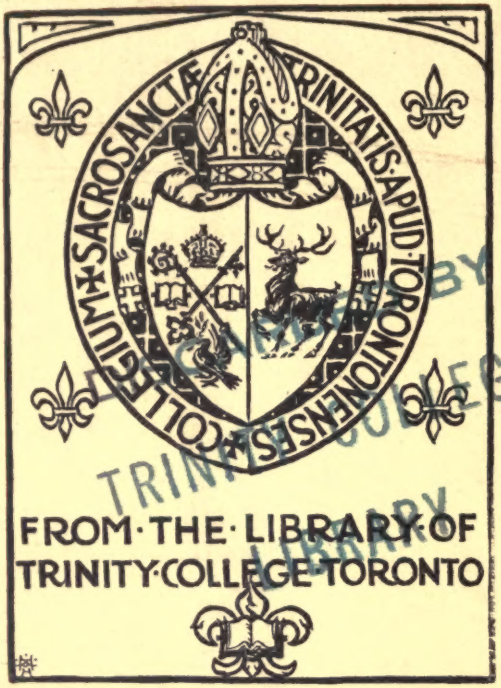
THE GATEWAY OF SCOTLAND

EAST LOTHIAN, LAMMERMOOR & THE MERSE

A. G. BRADLEY



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OR

EAST LOTHIAN, LAMMERMOOR AND THE MERSE

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THE GATEWAY OF SCOTLAND

OR

EAST LOTHIAN, LAMMERMOOR AND THE MERSE

BY

A. G. BRADLEY

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PREFACE

THAT the south-eastern corner of Scotland, or, in broad terms, the country between Berwick and Edinburgh, is as a whole the most historically interesting region in the northern kingdom, no one, I presume, will deny. Its geographical situation has virtually entailed upon it this distinction since recorded history began. Nor, having regard to the past as well as to the present, can any objection be urged against the title of this book. But it is not mainly for this reason that after some summers of rambling on the English Marches to the south of it, I have ventured to cross the Tweed, a liberty which I trust will be forgiven an Englishman by my readers in the north. For this little enterprise might with truth be designated a revisitation rather than a fresh departure. Indeed the reminiscent note so frequently sounded in these pages might almost call for some apology if it were not for the hope that occasional glimpses into another and widely different day might peradventure prove of some interest to a younger generation, even of Scotsmen. Moreover, it is at least noteworthy that so far as I know no appreciation by pen or pencil in book form of this distinguished and inspiring region—certainly no recent or accessible one—exists from which those who care to may gather something of it. My attempt to supply one may perhaps move some of those who race through this country so often by mail train to at least an arm-chair exploration of its features, which at the best are

noble and at the worst never commonplace. This is not a guide-book, though it may be incidentally noted that the standard guide-books treat these counties with scant consideration, not being a tourist country, a fact that may perhaps be accounted to its advantage. Nor have I any designs on the summer campaigns of the southern tourist. He goes, and probably always will go, with the crowds, protesting not seldom that these annoy him; though often, I suspect, impelled by the hallucination that all the delectable portions of his own country are thus invaded. Judging by the comparative paucity of physical and kindred attractions in some that are, he might well think so. As a matter of fact, Edinburgh folk almost alone among those outside it know anything of the old Eastern March of Scotland. The alien golfing contingent on the coast might be accounted an exception, if one did not know the not unnatural tenacity with which a visiting golfer clings to a first-class sand course that takes some getting to. But these things do not matter, for the motives that prompted this book have already been alluded to. It remains for me only to hope that it may be received not less kindly in the north than was its predecessor upon the neighbouring county of Northumberland.

A. G. B.

Rye, 1912.

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CHAPTER I

BERWICK-ON-TWEED

"Well, old man," said one of two long expatriated Scots to the other, with a slap on the knee and a fervour worthy of the occasion, "we're back in bonnie Scotland at last."

The scene was a railway carriage on the London and Edinburgh Express as it rolled slowly off the great Berwick viaduct on to the northern shore of the Tweed. It was unfortunate that the only other occupant of the compartment, who told me the story, was not only an oft-times Mayor of Berwick, but one of the most conspicuously zealous and erudite exponents of its historical past. And that Berwick is properly jealous of its ancient dignities, its quasi-autonomy in the first place, and, in the second, its inclusion or partnership in the kingdom of England, with that punctiliousness, too, which is only found on borders, is a mere truism. So in the few moments occupied in reaching Berwick platform, there was fortunately for them only time to inform these presumptuous Scots, with the curtness enforced by circumstances and justified by fact, that they were not by any means in bonnie Scotland, and would not be for some miles yet. Whether they called a porter to solve the mystery at Berwick station, or went on their way rejoicing as careless sceptics, matters nothing. For their only interest here is as prevalent and not abnormal types of the British traveller. At any rate very few Southern acquaintances of mine, I am quite sure, would

have felt any call to damp the patriotism of the Scottish exiles or been any wiser than they. Possibly a majority of Southerners and plenty of others besides would place Berwick-on-Tweed in Scotland, if suddenly challenged to stand and deliver themselves on the subject. And if a vague recollection of something geographically eccentric about Berwick comes down to them from days before they went to a public school and forgot their elementary geography and history, it is pretty certain that the town alone would be associated with it. Berwick bounds may possibly flicker as a dim phrase in some half-remembered ballad. But that the whole south-eastern corner of what by every law of nature and common sense should be the Scottish county of Berwickshire beyond Tweed, even to the measure of some eight square miles of pastoral and tillage upland, is English soil, remains, I feel morally certain, a geographical and political curiosity only understood by Borderers. Thousands upon thousands of Southerners by rail, and nowadays by road too, traverse this famous little " County of the borough and town of Berwick-on-Tweed " every summer, *en route* for the Highlands. It would be interesting to know how many of them hail the Tweed as they cross its waters as the Scottish boundary, and if road travellers pass Lamberton old toll bar without even a nod of recognition.

Berwick, I think, changed hands thirteen times; and if England had held it continuously as a protection to her frontier for over a century, it was a Scottish king of his own free will, in the exuberance of high spirits natural to the occasion, who confirmed its status. One can imagine a pawky soul like James VI., as on his journey southward he licked his chops at the fat prospect ahead of him, being in a mind to shower charters upon Englishmen. For Berwick, hitherto the Key of England,

had now with the Union of the Crowns become politically inconsequent. "The Borders are no longer the Borders, but the centre of my kingdom," exclaimed the joyful Jamie as he headed for the cakes and ale of the south, and fired a gun with his own hand from Berwick ramparts, in rather inauspicious augury, one might fancy, of the powder that was to be consumed before his ill-starred progeny were to be finally got rid of.

Dull indeed must be the soul who can look across over a brimming Tweed to the red-roofed, wall-girt town climbing the further shore to the sky-line without a quickening pulse. Northern towns, like northern folk, only more so, are apt to disguise their sentiment beneath a stern exterior, even when restless modern enterprise has not besmirched them out of all recognition. Glasgow was once the most bowery and altogether attractive town in Scotland, and delighted the eye of the eighteenth-century foreigner fresh from the gloomy shades and the insanitary terrors of Auld Reekie's mile-long highway. I have never read any eulogies of pristine Newcastle, King Coal having so early marked it for his own and befouled the streams of Tyne. But Berwick has happily escaped all taint or smirch of such necessary abominations, and still leads, as a place so nobly situated and of such teeming memories should lead, the clean and simple life, dealing only in the ancient products of land or sea. It is distressing that nearly all of the ancient castle, which must have stood up so proudly at the highest angle of that almost perfect circuit of enclosing wall which still haply surrounds the town, should have been displaced by a railway station. But we may be thankful that a generation which permitted this did not do a great deal more. It might have laid despoiling hands on a girdle of fortification not merely unique in Britain, but associated with a place where of all others

perhaps such reminders of a warlike age should make stirring and direct appeal to the historic fancy. Carlisle, Chester and Shrewsbury, York and Conway, each in their degree, have the same old tale still eloquent on their face. But Berwick was in truth the Key of England as it was by the same token the menace of Scotland. For look in the map, how old Northumberland here thrusts its narrow crown into the very flanks of its ancient foe, and how Berwick, like an outpost of an outpost, stands beyond the Rubicon !

The sunshine which illuminates so many days upon this north-eastern coast, and that, too, with something more of radiancy and sparkle than is common in our misty island, lights up the ancient town upon its genial southern slope, its tile roofs, and its patches of foliage with admirable effect. If a railway viaduct may be denied all harmony with a walled town, it can at least be imposing, and one is forced to admit that this gigantic structure, half a mile in length, and held in mid-air by nearly thirty arches, a hundred and forty feet high, makes no bad foreground to a distant prospect of town and river. Maybe there is something in the very contrast between this modern masterpiece, these elegant aerial arches with the train like a child's toy crawling over them, striding from hilltop to hilltop as if in utter contempt of Tweed's broad flood, and the old Tudor bridge, squat and massive, thrusting its long procession of low arches over the river's broad surface into the heart of the town.

The High Street of Berwick has a fitting portal in the Scots Gate, which connects the ramparts near the top of the town. It terminates, as if to mark the procession of history, in an imposing Town Hall that has the half-assimilated House of Hanover—I mean the period—writ large all over it. Its dates, too, are remark-

able. For the first part was finished in 1754, not probably an *annus mirabilis* in the historical curriculum of Berwickian schoolrooms, but the year when even Horace Walpole, who did not think imperially, wrote down that a random volley fired by a young Virginian in the backwoods of America, set the world on fire, or, in other words, that the great struggle between England and France for North America had begun. The year of its completion was the very one which witnessed the extinction of that conflagration and found Great Britain mistress of North America from the Floridas to the Pole, and of Heaven knows how much more besides. The belfry seems to belong to an earlier date, and the bells must have been just recast in time to ring out the capture of Louisbourg and to take up its turn as the church steeples of Northumberland echoed northward the greater glory of Quebec. Like the rest, too, no doubt it varied its frenzies with solemn tolls for the dead Wolfe, who in the preceding years, as a captain, major, or colonel of infantry, had many a time marched through Berwick. It was a neighbour, too—Captain Douglas of the Royal Navy—who brought the news to England, and his portrait hangs in the home of his descendants at Springwood Park, near Kelso. Belfries were in truth kept busy enough in those glorious and crowded years of Chatham's war, to say nothing of tolling out one George and ringing in another. I never look at Berwick Town Hall without a passing thought of America; not of that gigantic modern organism of motley composition and restless enterprise and overpowering modernity that stands for the term to-day, but the America of Washington and Franklin, and of those old communities still representative in their varying types of the past cleavages, civil and religious, of the Mother Country.

But there would need something more perhaps than the mere accident of a famous birth year to justify these parenthetical philanderings in Berwick High Street, and so there is. For contemporaries and replicas more or less of Berwick's Town Hall still here and there greet the wanderer in the old States of America, solitary landmarks of another age when they too rang peals on the King's birthday, and celebrated British victories in the Mediterranean or the Spanish Main. It must be furthermore recorded that this aspiring belfry, which commands such a breadth of classic soil and troubled sea, has exercised a function altogether unique, I believe, among civic buildings; for Berwick is nothing if not original in almost all that concerns it.

A Cromwellian church, though a rarity, if not generally a highly prized one, may be found here and there throughout England, but I do not know of any other church, Norman, Gothic, Cromwellian, or Georgian, whose bells are hung in the Town Hall and ring people to their devotions as these have done for centuries from the other end of the town. Here also still tolls the curfew, not merely at eight in the evening, but also at five in the morning, as the light sleeper will discover.

The wide, sloping High Street of Berwick wears for a northern town a really cheerful countenance, and the shops that front it make a display worthy of a place that, if it owes little or nothing to urban industries, takes toll from no mean territory of both nations, to say nothing of having been addressed in Royal Proclamations as a kingdom unto itself. It is still the common stamping-ground of the men of the Merse and of Northumberland, but in a fashion far different from the days when no name was bad enough for each to hurl at the other, or even in friendlier and more recent times when the Scottish and English

carters stood on different sides of the market. It is now Northumbrian ground in every essential particular, the powers of life and death granted or confirmed by James's charter to the Mayor, Recorder, and Aldermen, having been abolished in 1842, seventeen years before which they hung their last man or woman on Gallows Hill outside the old castle.

Berwick even still boasts the largest grain market in the north. Though so much of Northumberland has been laid away to grass, among Berwickshire farmers, stimulated not a little by the local brewers and distillers, wheat within the same easy memory has been largely displaced by barley. But all this country on both sides of the Border is the domain of the agriculturist and the grazier at their greatest and almost at their best, and of a land that giveth of its uttermost, as any one but a Cockney could see at a glance if he were satisfied with that, which will not be our case here. Berwickshire lairds and their broad-acred tenants, Northumbrian squires with their yet broader-acred ones, Scottish ministers and Anglican parsons, no longer outwardly distinguishable from one another, all forgather in Berwick High Street. As a matter of fact, I fancy a good deal of Berwickshire county business is discussed informally, at any rate, in the English town which most outsiders no doubt assume to be its capital. Hinds and bondagers in their best apparel from the fat lands of the Merse, or even shepherds from the southern slope of the Lammermoors or the heart of the Cheviots, or from the nearer mid-Northumbrian heaths, may be descried on market days, glowering with enraptured gaze at the resplendent shop fronts. But to give point to anything further that may be said here about the Berwick of to-day, some brief sketch of its crowded story seems quite imperative.

The long and bloody turmoil which raged for years before and after the Norman Conquest need not detain us, for Berwick and the river Tweed had small significance when Northumbria reached from the Tyne to the Forth, and the mightiest rock fortress in England, upon the high crag at Bamburgh, dominated a homogeneous Saxon people. The blood-spilling and devastation that preceded the arrival of William the Norman and split the Lothians and the Merse from Northumberland, was no question of race, nor of popular movement, but a mere orgy of kings and chieftains consumed with those passions for power or revenge which made up the main interest of their lives. It will be enough that the Lower Tweed became the boundary between King William's England and that heterogeneous collection of provinces and races that gave but intermittent and uncertain allegiance to the Scottish throne, till the prowess of Bruce and Wallace made that country, the Highland clans excepted, into a nation, and created the patriotism that gives the term significance. So without boggling over the prior scuffles of Dane, Scot, or Saxon, or the blows of the Norman Conqueror, which fell indiscriminately upon all such as were left of them, it will be quite enough to think of the Tweed in its historic sense, with Berwick for its watch-tower, as dating from the Norman Conquest. It is better for general purposes to charge the memory with a luminous epoch that is approximately correct than to confuse it with intricate modifications that do not really matter.

So when the Lower Tweed became the boundary between the kingdoms, Berwick, as was natural, remained a Scottish town, and though occasionally captured in times of war, no idea of attaching it to England seems to have been current. It was held once

or twice as a pledge for the good conduct of Scottish kings who had been worsted after making themselves troublesome on English soil, but that is another thing altogether. With a brief exception, Berwick was a purely Scottish town till the wars of Edward I., when the real ill-humour and hatred between England and Scotland began. Moreover, it was a marvellously busy and prosperous place as well as the constant resort of Scottish monarchs. Edinburgh and St. Andrews alone rivalled it in the northern kingdom, and scarcely any seaports in England equalled its foreign trade ; for though Scottish politically it tapped the whole of the English Borders. It was in the long and beneficent reign of King David of Scotland, who made it one of his four royal boroughs, that Berwick attained to its full importance, and this was in the first half of the twelfth century. Attempts were even made to reunite Northumberland with the land between the Tweed and Forth, but these came from the Scottish, not the English kings, and only brought defeat and disaster, notoriously so, at the hands of Henry II., who retained Berwick Castle as the price of victory. It was sold back to William the Lion of Scotland by Richard I., who would have sold anything for cash to finance his crusades to the Holy Land. William, however, was foolish enough at Richard's death to grasp again at Northumberland, which brought down John to Berwick, when a truce was made. Alexander, William's son, undeterred by his father's example, again flouted John, who was ill to provoke if there was any chance of his gaining the mastery. He came this time with a great host, vowing vengeance. Alexander made no attempt to hold Berwick, whose citizens were barbarously treated by John's soldiers, even to hanging them up by their fingers and toes till they disclosed the whereabouts

of their treasures. After a devastating excursion into the Lothians, the King burned Berwick, setting fire, it is said, to the very house that had sheltered him with his own hand. When he had eaten the district bare, and made a bonfire of anything that would burn, he retired to look after his refractory barons in the south, and after some retaliation on the part of the Scots and great fulminations on the part of the Pope, things eventually quieted down. After these amenities and with the death of John there was something like peace between the kingdoms and much good-will between the royal houses, strengthened by marriage ties, for some seventy years; and, indeed, the real severance between the Scottish and English people had not yet begun. An attempt was made to define the Border line, but this was in parts so shadowy that it was left undetermined, with the ever famous "debatable land" in the middle and western marches. The Scottish kings gave up all designs on Northumberland, and as regards the indeterminate nature of the political nationality of Cumberland through this period, we are in no way concerned with it.

But it needed something more than a fire in those days of wooden houses, or a massacre in times when human life was of small account, to quench the prosperity of a town that had any measure of it, and Berwick had a great deal. So its wool trade continued to flourish, and fleets of ships cleared from the mouth of Tweed for Flanders and for Calais. Flemish traders settled in the town, and the present post office in the wool market marks the site of the Red Hall, then the Exchange. The customs revenue from the port was an immense asset to the poor kingdom of Scotland, and was equal to one-fourth of all the customs of England, while the wealth of its prosperous burghers

must have been great for the times. They bestowed gifts upon almost every abbey in Scotland, and they lived in palaces, while Berwick was a second Alexandria, according to an enthusiastic visitor at that time. No wonder the Scottish kings and queens delighted in the hospitality of a place that must have been a prodigious contrast to the rest of their dominions, though it seems probable that southern Scotland in the thirteenth century enjoyed many amenities and advantages of civilisation that were swept away for centuries by the coming cataclysm and the chronic turbulence it created.

> "Alexander our King was dede,
> That Scotland led in luv and le,
> Alwaye was sovs of ale and brede
> Of wyne and wax of gamyn and gle,
> Our gold was changed into lede."

Edward I. was a great warrior and statesman beyond any doubt, but one of ruthless methods, and his shadow lay upon the coming centuries, whether for good or evil, at any rate after a fashion altogether foreign to his calculations. He had disposed of the remnants of Welsh independence, with which his predecessors had wrought unsuccessfully for two centuries, in one final campaign, and had taken infinite pains to give stability to the administration of an individualistic people, antipathetic and quite unintelligible to his own, but irrevocably destined by geography and by numerical insignificance to the union that he completed. It is not surprising that a man with great ideas and the ability to put them into practice dreamed of a united Britain. Scotland, all at least that stood for it in those days, was largely peopled by men of kindred, not alien ways and speech. His own Norman barons owned big slices of it, and passed as Scotsmen when convenient.

Their vassals had much more in common with the tenantry of Durham or Northumberland than either had with the natives of Devonshire. Edward was probably not a scientific ethnologist; he had not the benefit of modern analysis as to the conjectural proportion of Pictish, Irish, Scandinavian, or English strains in the blood of southern or eastern Scotsmen. It was enough for him, and would have been enough for any statesman of his day, that the men of all ranks to the north of the Tweed who exchanged blows with him were mainly a variety of that English race whom a divine Providence had called his own Norman stock to rule. He was perfectly logical in his views of the peace and power and solidarity so natural a union would confer on the island of Britain. The great barbarous back country to the north and west might well count for nothing with him when it counted for next to nothing politically in the kingdom of Scotland. To the impartial modern not obsessed with the prevalent mania for reviving sectional prejudices under miscalled headings, Edward's statesmanship was surely sound. If it succeeded, one need waste no words on the ages of suffering and misery it would have saved to both nations; but it was never brought to the test. Fate struck the tall man down too soon, and by the irony so often attached to that sinister deity, made things far worse than they would have been if Edward had left the whole business alone. There had been no previous animosity between English and Scots as such, but the legacy of wars that Edward left to less capable successors created a hatred and, what is more, a national feeling north of the Tweed that had hitherto scarcely existed, and was the fruits of victory. When the peaceful hopes of Edward were frustrated by the death of the young Queen of Scots, whose marriage with the first Prince of Wales was to have secured the

hoped-for union of the kingdoms, the English King contented himself for the time with the office of arbitrator among the candidates for the Scottish crown. The oft-adjourned ceremonies at Berwick and at Norham higher up the Tweed, which resulted in the selection of John Baliol, subject to an undertaking of homage to Edward, are among the memorabilia of history.

The last of these momentous gatherings was held in 1292 in the great hall of Berwick Castle, which covered, as already noted, the site of the present railway station. Here were assembled the notabilities of England and Scotland, including the power and might and chivalry of both kingdoms, backed by crowds of commoners from both sides of the Tweed. Few spots in England have witnessed a meeting fraught with more far-reaching consequences to Britain than this one so inharmoniously obscured by a bustling railway station. We all know that neither the selection nor the manner of making it was agreeable to the haughty temper of the Scots. No one probably knew this better than Edward, or, it might perhaps be added, cared less. After his business-like fashion, he had spent the whole summer and autumn in Berwick Castle, and before leaving it he broke the old seal of Scotland into four parts and put them into a leather bag to be placed in the English Treasury as a testimony that the kingdom was now in vassalage. Homage, however, had by no means always the subservient significance that the word might suggest to the casual reader. Without elaborating this matter further, it will be enough that Edward left a very unpleasant taste in the mouth of the Scottish nobles when he departed, while various high-handed measures concerned with Anglo-Scottish commerce and such like which immediately followed showed that he by no means intended that his suzerainty should be merely

one of lip homage. He was a man who had made few mistakes of policy in his pregnant reign, but he couldn't leave Scotland alone, and pressed his overlordship in various ways that a free, unconquered country could not brook.

The right of appeal from Scottish to English Courts was insisted on. The weak Baliol was summoned to London to justify certain proceedings, and actually stood at the Bar of the Parliament House. Scottish barons, too, were summoned to Edward's standard in his French war, and it is not altogether surprising that the group of nobles which in fact governed Scotland, now made an offensive and defensive treaty with France, a virtual commencement of the alliance with that country which for three centuries so harassed England. The Scots had already invaded England, so in the spring of 1296 Edward descended upon Scotland with 30,000 foot, 4000 horse, and a fleet. He made a beginning with Berwick, which was left to the sole defence of its garrison and unfortunate citizens. It was said that these foolish people sent taunting messages to this all-powerful warrior, and so helped that short and bloody work which was made of them. For eight thousand of them were slaughtered, and the mill wheels of the town could have been turned, says an old chronicle, by the torrents of blood. In the Red Hall which stood in the Wool Market thirty Flemish merchants defended themselves with great and sustained valour till they were burned alive in the ruins. The castle was soon afterwards surrendered, but its garrison was spared. New fortifications, which are still conspicuous, were at once commenced, the vigorous King, now nearly sixty years of age, tradition has it, wheeling a barrow himself. The ancient glory of Berwick sank amid the cataclysm to rise no more. It remained a

place of trade and of the first military importance, but no longer an abode of merchant princes and the delight of convivial monarchs.

We need not follow Edward on his victorious march round Scotland, nor yet on his subsequent invasions, which in reducing that distracted kingdom to submission bred within it the patriotism and union that under Edward's weakling son shook off the foreign yoke at Bannockburn and founded a nation. It may be mentioned that the English host marched from Berwick to that fatal field, and that while in the possession of Robert Bruce's people the town had to stand a determined though unsuccessful attack at the hands of a large army under Edward II., burning to avenge his late disaster. Soon after this Berwick witnessed the marriage of Bruce's son to Edward's daughter, which was to end all blood-letting. But it made little difference till, in 1328, the vassalage claim over Scotland was formally abandoned.

Edward III., however, provoked by the renewed turbulence in the north, began the whole business over again, and proved as great a scourge for a time to Scotland as his grandfather had been, without that prospect of union which had half justified his grandfather's policy. For if the Scots were not strong enough to withstand his armies in great shocks, they had now the memory of Bruce and Wallace to inspire them with patriotic ardour and give them sufficient determination to make their country impossible to coerce. Years of fruitless strife followed, though one must always try to remember that the barons of the feudal period in both countries existed primarily for war. Both they and no doubt a very large number of their following thoroughly enjoyed it. Without it for any length of time they must have been hopelessly bored, and, worse still, lost

some measure of cunning in the one art by which they held their possessions and their status in the eyes of their peers. Their form of hunting carrying no element of danger either in the pursuit or in the capture of their quarry, though interesting no doubt from a hound or hawk point of view, could never have been a substitute, but merely a gentle interlude to these sons of war. The tourney was much more like the real thing, of course. Indeed it must have been rather an appetiser than an alternative. Edward III. during a brief truce held a famous one at Berwick, when twelve Scottish and as many English knights were pitted against each other. From the chronicler Wyntoun's account of it, the percentage of mortality was about that of a severe modern battle.

But the third Edward did no outward damage to Berwick. On the contrary, he did much work on the fortifications. He also won the great battle of Halidon Hill, just outside the town, and revenged Bannockburn in a mere military sense. But the influence of Bannockburn lived on, while Halidon mattered little beyond the slaughter and the personal triumph. The King, however, who concerned himself much with the wool trade of the country, harassed that of Berwick so constantly with vexatious burdens that any tendency towards recovering its ancient prosperity was effectually scotched. But it remained a great military base, and was now again English soil. This was the era of the Percies, who succeeded one another as Governors of Berwick and Wardens of the March. It was also in this same sense the era of the Douglases, who became, as every schoolboy knows, their rivals to the north of Tweed. When royal hosts were not actually upon the war-path, these two great houses kept things lively with their own martial exuberance, while the strife that surged

backwards and forwards within touch of Berwick through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries made up the sanguinary tale. To tabulate the men of might who performed deeds of daring at Berwick or laid about them in its blood-stained neighbourhood would be merely to summarise English and Scottish history to no good purpose. For every one who was anybody was here at one time or another till the union of the crowns, and I shall likewise forbear any further pre-

The Mouth of Tweed.

cision as regards the thirteen separate occasions on which the town has been handed over from one nation to the other. It will be enough here that at the end of the Wars of the Roses in 1482 the last transfer was made, this time to the English by the Scots, who had held it for thirty years, and English it has ever since remained.

From the top of Berwick town, looking up the lower reach of Tweed with a cast to the southward, you can readily mark, some dozen miles away, the fir-crested

ridge of Flodden ; its six hundred feet or so of stature belittled rather from this point of view by the majestic masses of the Cheviots that rise in the immediate rear. The guns of Flodden were probably heard on Berwick ramparts, and of a surety even Berwick, satiated as she must have been with drum and trumpet, had been then long at ease, and may well have felt during those thirty days that the time of the Edwards had returned. For those of the Tudors were, or should have been, far humaner ones, and on the face of it this rousing of all Scotland to raid England on a trifling pretext when Henry VIII. and his chief forces were in France must always seem a flagrantly wanton business, almost, indeed, meriting its terrible recoil. Berwick had no direct concern with Flodden, save for despatching a few men there and receiving afterwards a division of the victorious army bearing the body of the Scottish King.

It had not been very long since the town had witnessed the effusive display and enthusiasm which accompanied the northward journey of Margaret, the sister of Henry VIII., to marry the ill-fated monarch. But Berwick had a great deal to do with the ferocious onslaughts on Scotland made by Henry in his later days through the agency of Lord Hertford. The King's instructions were of a ruthless kind, that would have almost made William the Conqueror or even John blush to indite, and in the course of two expeditions, in which Berwick was, as usual, a base, they were in great part carried out from the Tweed to the Forth. "Thanks be to God," reported Hertford, "there is not one peel, gentleman's house, nor grange we have not destroyed."

After Henry's death, during the ascendancy of Hertford, otherwise the Protector Somerset, and right on into the first years of Elizabeth's reign, Berwick was

the watch-dog of armed truces or the base of active conflict between the nations. It was then, after large sums had been spent at various times on the old fortifications, which were constantly displaying some fresh weaknesses before the growing force of artillery, that Queen Elizabeth, who in person or by inspiration was always happy in bringing the best talent to the aid of public works, made Berwick one of the finest models of defensive science in Europe. And there are the works to-day, almost as perfect in all essentials as the engineers left them, a spectacle unique in England, and rare anywhere. One feels tempted to recall Berwick as lying rather within these ramparts, than to describe the ramparts as surrounding Berwick, so great a factor are they in any survey of the place. There is a touch of irony in the reflection that after Berwick had been hammered through the centuries and bathed periodically in seas of blood, no hostile shot, so far as I know, was ever fired against these tremendous works, which were raised as much against the foreigner as against the Scot, the traditional Franco-Scottish *entente* being naturally in the mind of the builders. Completed in 1565, the next generation were to see Scotland and England united under one crown and international conflict cease, and with it the French danger at this point of the island. In the days of Elizabeth and the distractions of Scotland in those of the hapless Mary Stuart, the Borderers on both sides indulged in a perfect orgy of faction fights, and the two Governments were concerned more with their own police work than in quarrels with one another. Berwick, now one of the three best fortified places in Europe, had no longer any fear of Border raids, while it made an admirable police headquarters for several thousand men. Lord Hunsdon, the Queen's " dear cousin," is a name inseparably con-

nected with Berwick through this stormy period as grand policeman-in-chief, and it is small wonder, as a contemporary remarks, that this strenuous official lost all taste for field sports in the greater excitement of hunting and hanging the rievers of Ettrick and Jedburgh, and the dales of Rede and Tyne.

Happily a few sections of the old blood-drenched Edwardian walls, though mainly as grass-grown mounds, still survive. For Berwick had shrunk no little by the Tudor period, and the new lines were for the most part drawn considerably within the old defences. From the water tower, still in part surviving on the river bank above the town and just outside it, the Edwardian outer wall at a yet fair elevation climbs the steep grassy hillside to the railway station that covers the castle site. Away up at the high back of the town towards Scotland are grass-grown remains of the old wall, for the repairs of which so many successive kings and governors laid taxes on the sea-board trade and personal labour of the long-suffering townsfolk. To work out in detail the lines of either of these or of the Tudor fortifications is not our business here, and it has been admirably done in handy form by local experts. But I must not pass over the Octagonal Bell Tower which still, amid the suggestive grassy humps of turf-clad masonry, and with some dignity of isolation, looks northward towards Scotland and eastwards over the North Sea. The casual visitor will probably be told by the uncritical local patriot that this is the actual belfry that gave warning of the first glint of Scottish spears in the days of Bruce or the Black Douglas. Unfortunately this is barely half the truth, for this one here is a second edition, erected by the Tudor engineers of the later works upon the foundations of the old round tower which actually heralded these scenes of blood.

The old mediæval wall at Berwick, as elsewhere, was a plain curtain, punctuated at regular intervals with towers. Those who have seen Conway will have gathered the best idea of what a mediæval walled town looked like, for to-day it is still quite perfect, and it might be a picture out of Froissart. The sudden jump from this to the new methods which Italian engineers introduced to keep pace with improved artillery is amazing. Lucca, Verona, and Antwerp were the three first

The Walls of Berwick.

towns in Europe to adopt it, and Berwick here was the fourth. For tolerably obvious reasons, Berwick is now left as the sole example to the curious in such matters of a famous era in military history. Yet to the chance stranger, who between trains should find himself promenading for a mile or more over smooth walks laid upon these tremendous high-perched ramparts, they would assuredly suggest some relic of the great Napoleon, of scarce a century ago, rather than the precautions of a Tudor monarch. For here are not walls in the ordinary sense, but huge earthworks with

a perpendicular front of masonry some twenty to thirty feet high and nearly half as thick, the outer face being well laid with dressed and mortared stone. At regular intervals in this massive curtain are projecting bastions of equal or greater height provided with "flankers" and reached by long subways arched in by brick or stone.

The platforms and stairways are all in good preservation, and the arrangements for enfilading the curtain walls complete. This more immediately applies to the two higher sides of the irregular square which the works describe around the town, those facing the north and east. The other sides rest chiefly upon the river. A nobler and more suggestive promenade has no town in Britain than that round Berwick walls, nor are they disfigured or obscured by outlying slums or suburbs, but for the most part plant their feet cleanly upon pleasant meadows, while the town behind presses close up to their shelter and helps to complete the effect as of an ancient place of arms. Much of the stone for the Tudor fortifications was taken from the old walls, the rest was limestone from the adjoining seashore. This all sounds very nice and easy, but the great Eliza was a deplorable paymaster. Poor Rowland Johnson, who was overseer to all these works for twenty years, ultimately died of his efforts to wring adequate remuneration out of her for his labours. Hunsdon, the famous Governor who represented the Queen here for thirty years, and was a great favourite with her, had many a weary time, and cut grim jokes on the parsimony of his royal "cousin," protesting that "while the grass grows the steed starves," and that he was "fed on pap made from the yolk of an owl's egg." These dark sayings were the result of a letter from the Queen when the money for expenses was long overdue, which began, "I doubt not, my Harry, whether that

the victory (which occasioned the expense) more joyed me, or that you were by God appointed the instrument of my glory . . . but that you may not think that you have done nothing for your people, I intend to make the journey somewhat to increase your livelihood, that you may say to yourself, 'Perditum quod factum est ingrato.'" We know, however, that Hunsdon said nothing of the kind, but, on the contrary, made use of altogether different expressions, and those, too, in the vulgar tongue. Elizabeth kept very sharp eyes, though, on Berwick, and seems even to have grudged her harassed deputies an occasional holiday in some haven where the Borderer and the creditor ceased from troubling and the north-east winds were at rest. For while absent on one of these well-earned jaunts Hunsdon's son writes him in a hurry from London that the Queen, while playing cards in the presence-chamber, called him to her and asked when his father was returning to Berwick, upon which he informed her that the Governor intended to get back soon after Whitsuntide, that day being already the eighth of June, "Whereat she flew into a great rage, beginning with 'God's wounds' (we are not told what this great adept at forcible language ended up with), and that she would 'set you by the feet, and send another in your place.'"

Numbers of illustrious Scots, including Knox and other divines who occasionally found it a handy refuge from ecclesiastical opponents who could split hairs as truculently as themselves, or from sons of Belial, bishops, and such like, paid friendly visits to Berwick about this time, and walked upon the new fortifications, to their great amazement and edification. For us to-day, curious and interesting in detail as are the works upon which this noblest of civic promenades is

laid, the pulse is stirred more quickly perhaps by the opportunity they give you of grasping at a glance, and feeling to your marrow, if you have got any feeling, the full spirit and significance of the spot. For beside you, under the clear, unsullied canopy of the summer sky, lies this quiet market town enclosed within virtually the same embattled bounds, planted upon the same streets and wynds, as in the long past, when for centuries it knew no rest, and was the cockpit of the nations. Below, Tweed sweeps along the gathered tribute of a thousand mountain streams into the open sea as a noble salmon river should, the life of its mountain-born waters not yet extinguished by its brief tidal course, and battling gallantly with the salt waves about the narrow harbour bar. Away beyond Tweedmouth and Spittal, not, it must be admitted, worthy *vis-à-vis* of Berwick, the coast of Northumberland forges away to the long sandy flats of Holy Island with its solitary castle-crowned crag, and further yet to the dim uplifted mass of Bamburgh, the ancient capital of Northumbria, the rock fortress of "the Flamebearer" marking the limit of our southern outlook.

All the world that reads English—all such part of it, at least, that has been properly nurtured in its mother tongue—will expect the Cheviots to be in evidence from Berwick walls. And so, of course, they are, massing conspicuous upon the sky-line and carrying south-westward along their lonely crests the border-line between the kingdoms that Tweed has carried to their foothills. We have had enough for the present of battles, or it would be easy enough to pick over the country, spreading its broad Northumbrian fields and spacious Northumbrian landscape from Berwick to the Cheviots, and fill a chapter with the battles and sieges and forays that its landmarks call to mind. Indeed I

have already done so in another place,[1] and we are this time in the way of setting our faces northward.

There is no great store of ancient buildings in Berwick. Every vestige of the religious houses has vanished. In the upper part of the town there are some noteworthy open spaces known as "Greens," while the barracks, just two centuries old, were the first erected in the kingdom. The evils of billeting in a place so heavily and constantly garrisoned with all sorts of troops had been sorely felt. The men, too, under this system were out of control at night, and preyed remorselessly on the inhabitants. "The innkeepers," says a correspondent of that time, "could stand it no longer, and were all giving up their houses, and reputable persons who had been well-to-do were now reduced to begging their bread, from the continued exactions of their gallant defenders." In the lower quarters of the town there are some quaint wynds and corners of stern and sombre aspect, interesting from the fact that they are more or less interwoven with the town wall. The latter by the river-side follows the old Edwardian lines, while the unpretentious wharves where Berwick's fishing fleet forgather and her limited sea-borne trade is conducted, contribute a harmonious feature to this characteristic quarter of the town. Just here, too, is the picturesque old bridge of fifteen arches and nearly 400 yards in length. It was built in the reign of James I., and as everything in Berwick has the distinction of being unconventional, the first nine arches are all of different span. Yet more, the structure itself is, and always has been, the property of the Crown, not of the town or county, an annual subsidy being granted for its upkeep, and thereby placing another singularity to the credit of Berwick.

[1] *The Romance of Northumberland.*

It took a dozen years in the building, carried on out of funds from the Crown Treasury. For when partially completed the work was demolished by the violence of a flood which hurled the old wooden bridge, then still in use above it, against the half-finished work with disastrous effect. Several arches of Berwick Bridge were not so very long ago in the county of Durham, as if the status of Berwick itself were not sufficiently confusing to the uninitiated without allotting half its bridge to the next county but one, which, as a matter of fact, possessed at that time a strip along the Tweed. But Berwick is nothing if not original. The Northumbrian "borh" runs up to the Tweed, the lowland Doric runs down to it; and it is idle to pretend that the average native does not speak one or other of these kindred tongues. But apart from this, I am assured by a friend who is a native of Berwick, an etymologist, and expert in northern vernaculars, that the town has a distinct dialect of its own, used by the common folk bred within the walls. As he can illustrate it admirably himself, this turned my attention to the street-corner original, which in a few odd weeks' sojourn, with the ordinary varieties of Border dialect prevailing, one would fail to notice. The peculiar vernacular of the little Palatinate has sounds and notes in it utterly alien to the districts on either side, such as "butchar" and "doctar" with a mute *r*. My friend is of the opinion that southern regiments quartered here for protracted periods may have produced this hybrid but fixed speech among a certain class.

In recalling the extraordinary vicissitudes of Berwick, particularly that abrupt descent under Edward's devastations from a great commercial seaport to a merely garrison town of great importance, and then its collapse, after the union of the Crowns, to a purely provincial

town, one is speaking, of course, from a national point of view. For in the eighteenth century Berwick had all the social attributes of a county capital, though it was not one technically. There was a large garrison, and a considerable residential element in the usually accepted sense of the word. Lairds and squires, too, from both sides of the river, dined and drank and danced there. Its glory in this sense has now long departed, like the glory of other provincial towns. Nor has it caught the fancy of the modern *rentier*, nor even to an appreciable extent of the summer visitor. Spittal, a sort of extension of Tweedmouth at the mouth of the river, faces the open sea, with a long grey terrace of lodging-houses, their depressing architectural aspect redeemed, no doubt, in the eyes of their patrons by the pleasant strip of sand on to which their uncompromising portals give immediate access. The high ground south of Tweedmouth, on which of yore so many invading hosts pitched their tents, seems to be always casting sombre shadows over Spittal, and accentuates the unmirthful complexion with which it appears to confront the unalleviated rage of the north and east winds. This exposure perhaps constitutes its very merit in the August season, for babes and sucklings are, I believe, despatched hither in force from the humid, smoky cities of western Scotland to roll on the sand under the strong breath of the North Sea, while their guardians find mild excitement in watching the salmon nets which thrice a day, for two or three hours at a time, empty their stores on to Spittal sands.

Berwick also has its summer following, who occupy its rather limited and unenterprising accommodation, bathe in the rocky coves, play golf of a happy-go-lucky domestic nature, cricket or bowls on the broad green ledge between the eastern ramparts and the cliff edge,

or pace the long stone pier where also the salmon fishers ply their task. But in these days, when almost every place outside a city, irrespective of any visible attractions, harbours the summer visitor to the extent, and often to more than the extent, of its poor ability, the patrons of Berwick cannot be called a numerous company, and make no pretension to be a fashionable one. Yet the air is splendid for those who like to be braced, and the whole atmosphere is clean and sweet. The town in a human sense has always the sufficiently cheerful stir of a big provincial mart and even a little more in the summer season, for those who find comfort in such things rather than in the ever-abiding atmosphere of an illustrious past that is written all over it. To the south Holy Island, Bamburgh, and the fine golf links at Goswick are all virtually within sight. To the westward a line of railway follows the Tweed to Norham, Coldstream, the Flodden country, Kelso, and the land of Scott. Northward the rock-bound coast of Berwickshire pursues its rugged course of cliff and cove to the sublime and lofty solitudes of St. Abb's and beyond.

But the status of Berwick as a watering-place is of small relevance to our subject. It is more worth noting how few Southerners of the thousands who fly northward every summer think it worth while to have a look at it. After all, the average mortal cares mighty little about the past. It conveys almost nothing to him, and he submits only to such monuments of it that have been conspicuously labelled, and that he cannot with decency ignore. Berwick has not been thus labelled, and if you told a friend you were going there, he would almost certainly think that you were off to North Berwick (in East Lothian) to play golf. That, at least, has been my own experience. I have

been a good deal in Berwick at one time and another, and have sometimes been fortunate in the companionship of Commander Norman, R.N., who is chairman of the Berwick Historical Monuments Committee, that has done so much for the ancient town. As it is not possible to deal here with the technicalities of the fortifications, Edwardian or Tudor, it may be well to state that this zealous antiquary has embodied his intimate knowledge of them with illuminating brevity in a pamphlet that may be acquired at any local bookshop. During a recent sojourn in Berwick an episode occurred in connection with the walls, that provided a more humorous aftermath than might be expected of anything so serious as excavations. In digging the foundations for a new house near the Edwardian walls, a stone coffin was unearthed bearing the significant letters E.I. Deeply graven as is the memory of Edward I. in a town whose population he almost destroyed within twenty-four hours and in cold blood, we all know that he met his fate upon the Western March, and was buried, as is credibly recorded, at Westminster. But the magic letters were too much for some enthusiasts, too potent even for accepted facts, and quite a sharp controversy raged. When this was at its height a young man came forward and deposed before a magistrate that he had carved the letters himself a few days previously. Whether he had idly traced his sweetheart's initials or had sufficient history to attempt a practical joke on the sages of Berwick, though the sages themselves scoffed at the theory, I do not remember. But the opposite party threw discredit on the declaration of the frolicsome joker till one or two others came forward and solemnly deposed that they had seen him do it. Thus ended a nine days' wonder which through the daily Press raised a laugh on every breakfast table from

Newcastle to Edinburgh, and was borne by the local weekly to the lonely haunts of Lammermoor and Cheviot shepherds, to their great delight as I discovered later. For hill shepherds are generally antiquaries of a sort. Indeed they live and move among the tracks and lines of the dead, and cannot help themselves; besides, they are men of mind and character.

The salmon has, of course, always stood by Berwick through good and evil times alike. The little fishing-cobbles, with their broad flat sterns and cocked-up bows, are to-day a feature of the river the whole way up to Norham. Many of the net fishings in the lower reaches of the Tweed are the property of, or are rented by a company who have a large number of fishermen in their employment. So the fat and lean periods which are so associated with this hardy race under ordinary conditions are in this case the lot of the stockholders, who, no doubt, can face the worst. As a matter of fact, I believe the company pays a pretty regular dividend, ranging from five to fifteen per cent., a situation which has a painfully prosaic ring when associated with that noble denizen of a romantic river, the Tweed salmon.

The Tweed is administered by a Board of Commissioners, whose rights extend for five miles out to sea, and thirty miles north and south, within which area of 150 square miles, with the exception of about ten or a dozen fishing stations on the shore, no one is allowed to fish for salmon at any time of the year, by any method of capture—a restriction, I believe, no little grumbled at by the sea-goers, and not always regarded.

The herring fishing and its accessory industries, such as curing, is of importance to Berwick, as it is to every other place along this coast, and the red-sailed smacks crossing the bar to swell the volume of their fellows

Berwick-on-Tweed.

that in the early autumn fleck the North Sea, is a characteristic feature of the river life.

Nor would Berwick be Berwick without its Freemen, though there are impious wights who declare it would be better without them, or a good many of them. For the old town owns a slice of the landed property around it —thanks in great part to the exuberant good nature at a propitious moment of James I.—carrying a rental value of some thousands a year. A substantial portion of this is divided annually among the Freemen of Berwick, of whom, however, there are so many that the individual incomes derived therefrom are not large enough to benefit the reasonably prosperous, but just sufficient to tempt the lowly to loaf. There is an ancient school, too, where the Freeman received, if he desired, gratuitous teaching ; but in these days of free compulsory education, to say nothing of free meals provided by the much-enduring tax-payer, the Freeman's school, is not, I believe, in very great demand. These privileges, such as they be, besides, of course, the historic flavour attaching to them, which probably very few of the beneficiaries feel, are matters of inheritance,[1] the eldest son being automatically a Freeman, and the others becoming so by a nominal payment. The honour, as in similar endowments, can also be purchased, but not on such terms as to attract the outsider. Those who are capable of taking a pride in being a Freeman of Berwick, which I should certainly do if I were one, are doubtless of the type to whom the emoluments are of small account. But nevertheless it is an interesting and picturesque survival of what was a matter of great moment in former days. Many persons, again, were made Freemen for services rendered

[1] All sons become Freemen as soon as they are of age and choose to go through the ceremony and—needless to say—pay the fee.

to the town; some being thus favoured to whom the town owed money that it could not pay. Illustrious persons, too—dukes, field-marshals, and such like—of national fame have been placed on the list, not so much because Berwick honoured them, as that they honoured Berwick, and were assuredly not likely to claim their share of the soil or its spoils or to demand a free education for their offspring at the Freemen's Academy. My critics have sometimes been kind enough to say that in historical philanderings I know when to stop and to anticipate the yawn provoked by satiety. I trust that I have not forfeited their good opinion in this chapter. I am perfectly certain, on the other hand, that some Berwickians will protest that my sins of omission are unpardonable. Not a word, for instance, has been said of the Countess of Buchan, who was kept in a cage in the castle for four years for putting the crown on the head of Robert Bruce, or of the frequent sojourns here of Cromwell and of Charles I. and of the hanging of "Seton's sons." But I have long hardened my heart in this sense to the local patriot to whom the forbearance of the general reader is neither here nor there. Perhaps I know him better—the reader, I mean. If I did not, I feel sure the publishers and I would long ago have parted company.

CHAPTER II

COLDINGHAMSHIRE

THE coast of Berwickshire forms a striking and aspiring interlude between the low shores of Northumberland and East Lothian. Of those qualities appealing both to the eye and the heart that lift these rugged Northumbrian shores far above the level of the typical low-lying crumbly frontage that most of East Britain presents to the North Sea, I have written a good deal elsewhere. Of how East Lothian redeems its comparative lack of stature in this respect, I shall hope to say something later in this book. No Southron, to be sure, nor indeed very many Scotsmen outside the neighbouring districts, know anything of the coast of Berwickshire. But that means nothing, save that it gathers from such indifference the further distinction of aloofness from a restive world, which so well becomes a coast-line that for many miles is awesome enough in summer calms and positively terrific of aspect when waging its solitary conflicts with the storm. Yet the world, and that, too, in its thousands, roars past a section of it, along the very cliff edge, on leaving Berwick. Such passing glimpses as are caught here, however, are but a faint indication of what lies northward, when the train has swerved inland to wake the echoes of the bosky Lammermoor glens and, after twenty breathless miles, to leap out into the rich red sea-coast plains of Lothian. I doubt if the passenger takes much note of all this. For my part, I have never lit upon a

friend or acquaintance who has gathered any conception of the sixty miles between Berwick and Edinburgh from his Northern railway journeys. One might fancy that the passing glimpse of the fishing hamlet of Burnmouth, lying several hundred feet in a cleft of the red cliffs below the train windows, would catch even a vacant eye, or, again, that the winding wooded valley of the Eye, with the wayward humours of that delightful stream playing hide-and-seek for miles along the railway track, would in the course of years acquire some kind of recognition. It seems strange, too, that the beautiful tangle of the Pease Pass, which gave Cromwell so much trouble, with its flowery glades and leaping torrents and overtopping bulwark of purple moorland, followed by the sudden burst into the plains of Lothian, radiant in its matchless fertility between the Lammermoors and the sea, should leave no memory, whether at the end or beginning of so notable a highway so often travelled. Probably all this is not generally regarded as being in Scotland. At any rate, it is merely the Lowlands—infelicitous term of vague, misleading import to the average south countryman, and not supposed to be worthy of notice. Our friend is on his way to Edinburgh and to the Highlands, which are all mountains and, in fact, alone signify Scotland, so far as he is concerned. The Lowlands are all flat, and do not count except vaguely for those who still read Scott and "take in" Abbotsford on their way to the north. They contain counties the names and situations of which are the despair of the Southron, who may know Inverness-shire as well as Switzerland; names that will always prove a tower of strength in those geographical encounters which sometimes overtake the unwary wight in the disguise of a parlour game.

I forget what famous debater it was who used to

drive the last home-thrust into the vitals of a Parliamentary opponent by addressing him after his second title of *Baron Clackmannan,* an unfair ruse which always, it was said, brought down the House and left the luckless Baron smitten for the night beyond repair. Perhaps the motorist who riots abundantly at certain seasons on the North Road, which road keeps intimate company with the railway along these windy cliff edges and through the Arcadian glens that lead to Lothian, gathers something more of the quality of the way. But, after all, neither type of passer-by concerns us, who have not got to lunch at Edinburgh, nor yet sleep at Perth.

The Great North Road, which leads straight out through the bounds of Berwick, those half-dozen square miles of farming land filched from Scotland and assiduously " ridden " every year by the Berwick burghers as if to flaunt their ancient triumph, should of a surety provide the most callous wayfarer with something to think about. It is a bleak stretch, to be candid, this half-mile span of terrace that for some miles spreads from the cliff edge to the long slope of Halidon Hill and Lamberton Moor and bears both road and railway northward. Nor is this amiss. For it is a region of stern as well as of splendid memories, of slaughter as well as pageant, and it is infinitely to our advantage that we can look all over it unobstructed by woods and country houses, howsoever gracious in their place. The long narrow strips of tillage, of grain, or hay or roots that follow one another from the road to the cliff edge far upon our way would not claim elsewhere any more notice than as a bright foreground to a boundless blue sea, flecked with the sails of craft from a half-score of fishing villages But the commonplace acres gain really some dignity of association when you remember that they are the individual holdings of the four hundred

and odd hereditary freemen of Berwick. Even the huge sweeping fields of grass or barley that climb in their rather sad, unadorned economic fashion the fateful Hill of Halidon, though in truth they need no further story, gain a little added interest from the fact that they belong to the historic corporation of that town. It is good, too, to be able to look far ahead along the wide open road to the famous Lamberton Toll Bar, the Gretna Green of the Eastern Marches, where another blacksmith or the like tied up as many runaway couples as crossed the Solway; which, by the way, if for a quite different reason, is no more the international boundary, though nearer to it, than is the Tweed here. But these are mere trifles of yesterday, and Lamberton is incomparably greater as an ancient trysting-place than Gretna, though the schoolboy in the Antipodes is familiar with the one and probably no one in Hampshire ever heard of the other. For Lamberton saw many an Anglo-Scottish pageant. Margaret of England, daughter of Henry VII., was met here when, as a girl of thirteen, she proceeded northward with unprecedented pomp to marry the gallant Scottish King, who a dozen years later widowed her at Flodden Field. Two thousand nobles and gentlemen, riding three abreast, escorted her to the Old Kirk which once stood at Lamberton, and there handed her over to an equally gay company from Scotland, who carried her northward to Edinburgh. There were ladies as well as cavaliers on horseback in this fair company, which is minutely described by John Young, Somerset Herald, with their jangling bells and persons arrayed in cloth of gold, and horses frisking in trappings of the same. The Princess herself, in attire laced with gold and precious stones, was carried in a litter surrounded by attendants mounted on palfreys. Pavilions were pitched at Lamberton for each degree,

where with more wassail, such as Lord Dacre, Governor and Warden of the Eastern March, had already indulged them with at Berwick, the merry travellers made "great chere"; no less than six hundred of them going on with their Scottish friends to make another night of it at Coldingham. And how about Coldingham and its worthy monks and villagers, one might well ask, when this swarm of gilded locusts settled on it; or did they, as was probable, levy handsome tribute on their wealthy visitors?

Those were surely great times for country folk! In the intervals of killing or being killed they had no end of spectacular compensations. Fancy the Royal Family, half the House of Lords, all the chief Cabinet ministers, bishops, generals, and admirals, blazing in jewels and radiant apparel, camping out on your village cricket ground! James I., too, here first entered upon his kingdom, being met with ceremonies worthy the occasion by the great ones of the English Border. Mary Stuart, in the thick of her troubles with the truculent, self-seeking nobles that buffeted her in such pitiless fashion about southern Scotland, rode on one occasion to the hill above on her way to Coldingham. She was apparently impelled by mere curiosity for a distant view of the famous town. But the news had reached Berwick that she was hovering near, and the gallant Sir James Foster, then Governor, gave orders for all the great guns to lift up their voices on the new ramparts, and himself repaired with forty horsemen to the Bounds. Here he met the Queen with Huntly, Murray, Lethington, and Bothwell, and five hundred horse, when they all rode up to the top of Halidon Hill, and the great guns of Berwick, two miles away, roared all that afternoon and all that night in honour of the hapless and immortal charmer.

Charles I., on his progress to Edinburgh in 1633,

after ten days at Berwick, was met at the Bounds by an amazingly numerous and brilliant company of Scotsmen. Six hundred mounted gentlemen from the Merse alone, were here, relations or dependents of the Earl of Home, in green silk doublets with white scarves, and formed but a small portion of the loyal array, which included most of the nobility and gentry of Teviotdale and the three Lothians.

But this will never do! We might stand at Berwick bounds and call up whole centuries of royal and famous pageants, from William the Lion onward. Lamberton Toll is now represented by a couple of humble dwellings, apparently quite unconscious of the significance of their site, facing each other over a lonely bit of highway; though one of them, I believe, was once the actual blacksmith's shop which did such a roaring matrimonial trade in comparatively recent days. There is an air of melancholy and inconsequence about the once famous spot that to the dreamer of dreams is not unwelcome. Little is to be seen from it but the hill of slaughter, rising abruptly inland, where breadths of seeds or barley wave and turnips flicker in the summer breeze, while the white curving road trails away to north or south. Gulls from the neighbouring cliffs, but a couple of fields distant, scream and wheel from England into Scotland, and from Scotland into England, back and forth, or follow in long restless files the track of a hind's plough as he turns the red soil of the Corporation acres. A group of women workers, picturesque in their regulation garb of blue blouse, pink neck-cloth, and short linsey skirts, come cackling betimes along the road, or a mournful pair of professional roadsters shamble southward, shaking the dust of Scotland and its sterner poor-law methods from off their feet no doubt with joy and

renewed designs upon the more long-suffering ratepayer beyond the Tweed. Motors, branded with the brand of remote counties, throb past at intervals and fly the Bounds with joyous unconcern, and little heed or notion that they are raising classic dust.

It was hereabouts that the old road to Edinburgh left the line of the present one, and climbed up past Lamberton Manse and the now vanished kirk to the long lofty plateau of Lamberton Hill. Upon this far-spreading common, renowned in Georgian times for one of the chief Border race-meetings, lay the Scottish army, while on Halidon, a lower continuation of the same ridge, towards Berwick, Edward III. drew up that army which was to avenge his father's unforgettable defeat at Bannockburn. Lamberton Common is now a delightful mile or so of gorse, bracken, and sward, lifted some 700 feet above the sea, whence you may look out over half southern Scotland, and more than half Northumberland, while Halidon has been long enclosed and tamed to the plough. But there is a dip between the two hills, and the Regent, Archibald Douglas, who commanded the Scots, forgot the precepts of the dead Bruce never to attack the English in a pitched battle, and forgot it at a moment when his enemy was in great fighting trim, and furthermore occupied a strong position.

Edward was investing Berwick, then in Scottish hands, and articles of surrender had already been signed for an early day, provided that the city was not in the meantime relieved. This, however, was just what Douglas and the Scottish army now essayed to do. There was not much strategy about the battle, and none of the old writers have found very much to say about it except in regard to the slaughter which ensued. I am afraid many readers will be surprised to hear that

Sir Walter has celebrated it in a metrical drama, and no doubt for its very paucity of outstanding detail, borrowed the well-known Gordon-Swinton scene from the later affair at Homildon. One famous incident, however, preceded the battle and augured badly for the Scots. For one of the Turnbulls, a gigantic Scotsman, accompanied by a furious mastiff, strode forth from the ranks and challenged any warrior in the English army to single combat. Whereupon stepped forth one Sir Robert Benhale of Norfolk, a man of prowess and great skill in arms, though of only moderate stature. He disposed of the mastiff's attack by a single blow, and, after a brief encounter, sliced off Turnbull's right arm, and then, according to the current etiquette of such proceedings, removed his head.

The Scottish infantry attacked uphill and were repulsed. The cavalry got mired in a swamp, and their curiously fashioned horseshoes are frequently to this day ploughed up, one being in my own possession. It was the old story of the English archer, now just arrived at the zenith of his fame and skill, whose terrible volleys were again and again too much for even the valiant North Briton. It was here as at Homildon Hill, within easy sight of the crest of Halidon, forty years later. Whether these archers, like the others, came from the Welsh Marches, the nursery of the English bowman, I know not, but it matters nothing, the result was equally fatal. The arrows flew, says an old chronicler, "like motes in a sunbeam, and no coat of mail could withstand them." And so also King Edward, in Sir Walter's drama—

> "See Chandos, Percy. Ha! St. George! St. Edward!
> See it descending now, the fatal hail shower,
> The storm of England's wrath, sure, swift, resistless,
> Which no mail coat can brook."

BURNMOUTH.

And to Percy, who exclaims that it darkens the sky and hides the sun—

> "It falls on those shall see the sun no more.
> The wingèd, the resistless plague is with them.
> They do not see and cannot shun the wound.
> The storm is viewless as Death's sable wing,
> Unerring as his scythe."

It was soon a rout. Only seven Englishmen fell, says one account, while the Scottish loss is quoted by various writers, after their hyperbolic fashion, at from 14,000 to 56,000. The stricken host was pursued all the way to Ayton, four miles distant, and were cut down apparently like sheep, for the entire route, we are told, was strewn with corpses.

> "These men might well see
> Many a Scot lightly flee,
> And the English after priking,
> With sharp swerdes them stryking."

The slaughter was so great among the Scotch nobility that the English vainly flattered themselves with the prospect of no more Scottish wars, since no man capable of leading an army appeared to be left alive.

Bannockburn seemed indeed to be avenged, and the triumphant Edward left a sum of money to the nuns of a Cistercian house then standing at the foot of Halidon Hill, for a perpetual celebration of his famous victory. The convent, the nuns, the vows of eternal pæans in Edward's glory, and masses for the innumerable dead, have long vanished in dust and fantasy, and the bloody, corpse-strewn track of the hapless Scots to Ayton, which we may now follow, has been washed by ten thousand storms, and turned over and over by a thousand ploughs.

But Burnmouth, the first gash in the red cliffs north of Berwick, and that in truth a mighty deep and narrow one, is well worth the trifling detour from the highway, if only for a glimpse of the hamlet clinging to the base of the cliff, where from the heights above there appears no space for what is in fact a whole community of fisherfolk. It is well worth the steep descent of three or four hundred feet, by the rough road that gives these hardy sons and daughters of the sea access to the upper world. Or failing that, there is a grassy platform more than half-way down which exposes in a way that an artist would surely seize upon, this really uncommon and quite exquisite picture of a Scottish fishing village. At any rate this vantage-point comes back to me from a summer evening not long ago, when the sea was at its bluest, the overhanging cliffs at their ruddiest, the greenery which hung over their summits and even crept down their steep sides at its greenest. The red-roofed cottages, thrust into the cliff-foot or perched about on rocky knolls covered with drying nets, sent their wreaths of smoke straight upwards in the moveless air, for the boats had just come in and suppers were no doubt impending. Short-skirted women were carrying baskets of fish ashore upon their bent backs, for the males of their kind, when they have beached the boats, hold that their part in the domestic economy is ended. The gulls swung screaming from side to side of the great cleft, or floated far below upon the glassy tide that exposed every rib of the submerged reefs which pave the whole of this inhospitable shore. For even here, a fishing station, the only refuge for craft too large to beach is a small artificial harbour, where three or four herring smacks were on this occasion idly lying.

Nobody would ever dream of suggesting that North

Britain, on either side of Tweed, can pride itself on the æsthetic quality of its inland villages. So it is perhaps just as well that in the agricultural districts villages are comparatively scarce, the hind and his family being generally quartered in those rows of low, red-roofed cottages that cluster round the great farm steadings, and redeem them in some measure from their rather uncompromising utilitarianism. There are exceptions, however, and Ayton is one of them, as if conscious that first impressions count for much, and that some effort is demanded of the first village upon Scottish soil encountered by the northward-bound stranger. It is but fair to admit, however, that there is no sign of self-consciousness about Ayton, unless a large handsome modern kirk at its outskirts, set amid all the mellow surroundings of grove, stream, and well-tended graveyard that graced an ancient predecessor, count for such; while within this same predecessor, it is interesting to remember, was held at least one Anglo-Scottish conference of import to both kingdoms.

Nature has done a good deal for Ayton, and the castle perched amid its nobly timbered parklands above, that has been for all time associated with it, has done perhaps more. The approach to the foot of the wide ascending village street touches the romantic, for it is made over a bridge of a single arch thrown across a deep rocky chasm, where, smothered in foliage, the pellucid waters of the Eye make gentle music. Below this again they continue to burrow with complaining voice through three more miles of woodland to the sea at Eyemouth, a little fishing town of picturesque environment and of much note in that portion of the outer world concerned with herrings, mackerel, or cod. The castle entrance, too, stands near the bridge in all that pomp of massive Gothic red sandstone architecture

with which the great Scottish Border mansion is apt to emphasise its dignity, and when, as in this case, such lordly portals are overshadowed by stately timber, the effect is admirable.

Nothing of particular note or antiquity stands out in Ayton village. Helped, however, by its pleasant site, its wide sloping street, and its quite tolerable dimensions, it has an air of old-fashioned dignity and consequence that is assuredly lacking in most of its neighbours. Like every other place with a church and a castle on this great highway, Ayton has a lengthy chronology and is steeped in historical incident, which it would profit us nothing merely to tabulate. The present castle is modern, but no less baronial in aspect for all that—a red sandstone pile of the typical Scottish type with the characteristic French affinities. It is beautifully placed high up amid a wealth of verdure, and altogether so conspicuous from the railway that even our much apostrophised friend on the Edinburgh mail must acquire in time some acquaintance with it. It has broken its family as well as its structural links with the past, which is as chequered a one as you would expect from a Border castle. Surrey destroyed an early edition of it in the reign of James IV., when he "continually bet it from two of the clock in the morning till five at night," and after sparing the garrison, "razed it to the playne ground." This was in pursuit of the Scottish King, who had espoused the cause of Perkin Warbeck and raided Northumberland and Durham till, if I remember rightly, the more tender-hearted Pretender, unused to Border amenities, protested against such wanton ravage. James, says the chronicler Grafton, lay supinely within a mile of Surrey at Ayton and saw the smoke of the bombardment. He sent heralds to the Earl offering him single combat

with the town and policies of Berwick as the stake. Surrey replied that Berwick was the property of the King his master, and not his own to wager away, but declared himself to be highly honoured that so great a monarch should make such flattering proposals to a "poor Earl." He awaited, however, the attack of the Scottish army, till both sides, having exhausted the resources of that "tempestuous, unfertyle, and barrein region," went their homeward ways. Surrey would be surprised if he could see the present-day agriculture of the "barrein region" whose many towers he "razed" on that particular expedition. So, I might add, however, would a modern south country farmer.

Ayton may in a manner be said to form the entry into that projecting block of Berwickshire which is cut off from the rest of the county by both main road and railway, that together leave the coast at Burnmouth and together meet the sea again at Cockburnspath. The old name of "Coldinghamshire" which roughly covered it might be conveniently revived for our brief purpose here. Indeed the county, besides its two natural divisions of the Lammermoors and the Merse, might for purposes of lucidity be accredited with this as a third one. For it is made up of a fragment of both the others, and, with the modern road and railroad for a base, forms a triangle, the point of which is St. Abb's Head, while either side is washed by the North Sea. The coast sides are each some dozen miles in length as the crow flies, the base nearly twenty. Eyemouth lies just within it, beneath the southern horn of Coldingham Bay, which forms indeed the eastern side of the triangle, and, though fearfully rugged and broken, is comparatively low-lying. The northern side of the triangle from St. Abb's Head to Cockburnspath is an

unbroken barrier of savage, inaccessible cliffs with practically no human life in their neighbourhood.

The considerable village of Coldingham, with its famous abbey, is virtually in the heart of what I shall make free, in the phrase of the ancients, to call Coldinghamshire, as Hexham, Norham, and Bamburgh, with less geographical cause, at any rate, carried the like honour. The whole triangle, and more besides, like the clearly defined " shire " of Hexham, was no doubt held in one way or another of the abbey. Indeed the term Coldinghamshire is as old as the Saxon period, and its limits were clearly defined later on by William the Lion. But as antiquaries admit themselves baffled by the enigmatic surveys of that energetic monarch, his primitive landmarks having no doubt disappeared, we need not worry about such things here, but confine the ancient and convenient term to the limits described. Coldinghamshire displays a variety of character and scenery that many a region of its size, trumpeted by railroads, exploited by newspaper essayists, and laboured at great length by guide-books, might envy. Its eastern half is largely filled by grouse moors and wholly flanked by the weirdest and most imposing sea-coast that Britain presents to the North Sea. Upon Coldingham itself lies the atmosphere of a great pre-Reformation church centre. In Eyemouth and St. Abb's village are most felicitous examples of the important and the primitive Lowland fishing villages respectively. Around Ayton and in the western part of the " shire " is the opulent landscape already alluded to, while the deep woody valleys and ravines of the Eye and Pease, with their glittering streams, strike yet another note.

Coldinghamshire owes its qualities to the fact that it is in great part formed by the seaward extremities of the wild and lofty range of the Lammermoors.

Starting, in name at least, from the deep channelled country south of Edinburgh, through which the Gala

Fishing Boats, Eyemouth.

and Leader run to Tweed, and thence forging eastward

to the coast, this great heath-clad barrier completely severs Lothian from the Merse and Tweeddale, and is in short the outstanding physical feature of the Eastern March of Scotland.

The road from Ayton to Eyemouth which skirts the castle is a short hour's walk, and well worth doing, if only for the intimate terms upon which it so frequently places you with the last and perhaps the most beautiful three miles of the Eye's course. The little river terminates its career in a remarkably abrupt transformation, within a few hundred yards, from limpid cascades tumbling over mossy rocks in the seclusion of inviolate woodlands to a deep channel where fifty or sixty large fishing smacks may often be seen densely wedged between stone wharves. The architecture of Eyemouth is undeniably depressing, though quite a number of summer visitors put up with its sombre aspect for the charm of the rocks and the sea, the cliffs and the coves which lie around it. For the town has long outgrown the promiscuously picturesque collection of red-tiled, white-walled cottages that makes the more primitive fishing village of this ancient kingdom of Northumbria from the Forth to the Tyne pleasant to behold. Immense stacks of herring barrels were piled up on the wharves when I was last there, and a communicative aboriginal, with his hands suspiciously deep in his pockets, who may, for aught I know, have been the self-appointed orator of a taciturn breed, and not much more, gave me the figures of a contract (for Russia, I think), which were of an imposing kind. Fish-curing employs the lasses of Eyemouth, and their haddocks are quite celebrated.

A century and a half ago, when the first pier was built at Eyemouth, Berwick received a disagreeable jar. It seems that the monopoly so long enjoyed by

that port had emboldened its traders to treat the neighbourhood in rather high-handed fashion. So the lairds and farmers concerned with sea-borne freight, legal or illegal, turned with alacrity to this new outlet. Thirty years ago Eyemouth was overwhelmed with a disaster such as has never probably in modern times smitten a little fishing port, no fewer than 129 of its hardy sons being drowned in a single storm, and most of its fishing fleet destroyed. It has enjoyed, too, among some readers of Scott an adventitious reputation as the scene of the immortal and resourceful Caleb Balderstone's raids for the replenishment of his master's empty larder and the saving of his master's honour at the grim fortress of Wolf's Crag. As some eight miles, much of which is rugged cliff edge, divide Eyemouth from Fast Castle, undoubtedly the inspiring original of Ravenswood's storm-beaten tower, one must reluctantly forego all temptation to include any of the characters in that great tragedy among the local genii. St. Abb's indeed would have a prior claim if precise topography was applicable to the famous drama. But I think that any one who had tramped afoot between that village and Fast Castle in broad daylight would abandon all attempt to connect its fortunes with those of this gruesome stronghold, or to imagine Caleb toddling down there at night and returning betimes with a lean hen for his master's supper.

Coldingham, some four miles away, lies, as already noted, where the lower and the higher regions of its shire meet. It is a place of no infrequent pilgrimage for the people of Edinburgh and the Eastern March generally, and of resolute antiquarians, of course, from much farther afield. Traps of assorted kinds meet those slow trains on the main line which stop at Reston Junction and bear away on most fine summer days a

moderate company of tourists over the three miles of fine undulating highway that bisects the shire and leads to Coldingham. Adjoining the village, which, by the way, is another welcome exception to the prevailing North British type, are the remains of the abbey. The only important and conspicuous portion extant is the original choir, for the excellent reason that it has been repaired and preserved for the purposes of a parish kirk, while the other more or less fragmentary relics of the once great monastery occupy the well-filled and well-kept graveyard.

The monastery was founded in 1098 about two miles from the site of the primitive establishment of St. Abb's. This last is attributed to Ebba, daughter of Ethelbert, King of Northumbria, and sister to the pious Oswald, who under marvellous circumstances, as some will remember, won the victory over the heathen hosts at Heavenfield, near Hexham. At all events, Ebba retired here, before the appointment of St. Cuthbert to the bishopric of Lindisfarne. Legend tells of this saintly lady escaping from enemies who had made her captive near the Humber, in a boat, and being safely and providentially deposited beneath St. Abb's Head, which from this incident derived its present name. Here Ebba remained in the convent she founded in thankfulness for her escape, and together with her novitiates, being no doubt unversed in the ritual and discipline of conventual life, she sent for Cuthbert, who, lately risen from an obscure shepherd boy in the Lammermoors, was now Abbot of Melrose. The opportunity of being by the seaside for the first time was seized upon by the holy man, according to Bede, for inventing a new kind of penance. For when Ebba's flock were all wrapped in slumber he would steal down to the lonely shore and stand for the whole night up to his neck in the water

engaged in prayer and praise till the time approached for the regular morning devotions. An inmate of the establishment, stirred by curiosity at these midnight excursions of the pious abbot to follow him and to become a secret witness of his proceedings, himself reported this to the historian. He also affirmed that when the saint came out of the water after his long immersion, two sea-lions (seals) followed him, warmed his feet with their breath, and dried them with their skins, after which they received Cuthbert's benediction, and retired again into the deep. Ebba's foundation continued to be the scene not merely of supernatural marvels, but of sensational human performances. Once when a Danish raiding party were on the shore, and the nuns feared for their chastity, they sliced off their noses and upper lips, which so disgusted and enraged the intending ravagers that they burnt the building and the nuns within it. This appears to have happened about the year 870, and was the second and apparently final destruction of the monastery. The first, according to Bede, was soon after the death of Ebba, and was a visitation of God, long before seen in a dream, upon the loose living of the inmates. For this, like most of such Saxon houses, was in two sections, for men and women respectively, an abbess presiding over both.

But the priory of Coldingham has only an uncertain connection with the ancient foundation on the headland, and its chequered tale is modern history compared to the weird chronicle of the other. It was founded in 1098 by Edgar, King of the Scots, or of some of the Scots, after his victory over the usurper Donald, and dedicated to St. Cuthbert for full value received, if the visions of a Scottish King after dining with the monks of Durham can be attributed to saintly inspiration.

St. Cuthbert himself on this occasion was the nocturnal visitor to the King, then on his way to recover his kingdom, and guaranteed that if he carried the Durham banner before him, the victory was as good as won. So Edgar borrowed the cathedral banner of St. Cuthbert from the monks and caused it to be borne before his army, a proceeding which fully justified the promise of the saint, and so intimidated the enemy that numbers of them changed sides on the spot and thereby assured the victory to Edgar. In the joyful and grateful mood

Coldingham Priory.

natural to his triumph, the King founded the Priory of Coldingham, introducing thereto Benedictine monks from Durham, as was only right, and endowing it handsomely with manors. He furthermore laid a yearly tribute to his new priory on all the inhabitants of Coldingham-shire for the greater advantage of his own soul and that of his father and mother, brothers and sisters, a means of salvation that must strike our modern notions as singularly mean, and as attributing to the Deity a remarkable absence of the judicial instinct.

So Coldingham flourished and became the most powerful monastery between Berwick and Edinburgh.

Among its earliest possessions were many well-known places in the Merse, like Swinton, Lennel, Earlston, Edrom, and Stitchell, where in due course it erected churches and established parish boundaries much as they stand to-day. To follow the story of Coldingham would be to labour the whole stormy sea of Scottish history. Its position may be referred to, however, as singular—that, namely, of a Scottish monastery ecclesiastically associated with Durham. More than one King of Scotland endeavoured to alienate it, James III. more particularly, who lost his life in the attempt. For the Homes, ubiquitous and powerful in Berwickshire for centuries, and indeed all-powerful in the fifteenth century, regarded it as their particular care, with the ultimate result that the King fell in battle at Sauchieburn. His son, however, annexed Coldingham to the Scottish Crown and placed it under the Abbey of Dunfermline. Several of the priors in its later days, being members of the great, ever-factious Scottish families, came, as was inevitable, to violent ends. Hertford in his devastating march of 1545 set fire to the buildings. Then came the Reformation, and in 1560 the monastery was dissolved. It had entertained in its day almost every one who was anybody in Scotland, and in 1648 Cromwell completed its long list of distinguished visitors, and at the same time, upon the capitulation of the Royalist garrison, who had fortified it against him, terminated its physical existence by blowing up all but the two sides of the church, and undermining a tower which fell later. The memory of Queen Mary's stay here, like the memory of everything else associated with that hapless lady, who has so captivated the imagination of posterity, is perhaps the most familiar in its story to casual acquaintances, and we have already described how she came here from Lamberton with a great com-

pany. Whether the Queen herself slept at the priory or at Houndswood, four miles away, still vexes the soul of the antiquary, while a farmhouse near the latter place called Mount Albion is supposed to commemorate the spot where she mounted her white palfrey for the homeward journey.

The original church, as the visible remains of walls and the foundations of others discovered during the restoration testify, was a large one, consisting of a central tower, a nave ninety feet long, with aisles and transepts, the latter having eastern aisles or chapels. The choir, of equal length with the nave, was aisleless, and was, in fact, the church we see before us to-day. The whole building was used freely as a stone quarry by the natives of Coldingham in old days. It is fortunate that the heritors of the parish had both the sense and the taste to make some reparation half a century ago for the ravages of their fathers and grandfathers and restore the choir as the parish church—that is, to build a west and a south wall upon the old foundations on to the north and east sides, which were still perfect, and to roof them in. They were assisted by the Crown, which perhaps ensured a structural harmony that neither the period nor the locality might have been wholly trusted to bear in mind. A curious English reader may possibly say to himself, "And what is a heritor?" for the Scottish Church is a subject upon which the average Southron of intelligence is complacently in the dark. Nor, probably, does occasional attendance at a Highland Free Kirk in August shed much light upon the darkness. The heritors, then, to waive technicalities, are, speaking generally, the substantial men of the parish, whether owners or occupiers. They are responsible for everything practical connected with the Established Church of Scotland. Their body, unless

voting is required,[1] elect the minister, and they are responsible for his salary. The Scottish tithe is not fixed on a term of years' sliding scale of the price of grain, as in the English Church, but each year the market price is settled by a jury, presided over by the Sheriff, who meet and discuss the matter from the standpoint of their own experience. Mr. Henderson and Mr. Thomson (without the "p," *if* you please) quote the prices obtained at Berwick for their barley, or Messrs. Deans and Logan assess the average value realised for wheat at Dunbar or Haddington by some such personal and doubtless sufficiently equitable method. The tithes are collected and paid to the minister on the responsibility of the heritors. He does not have to collect his dues like a landlord after the fashion of his English brethren, though they come, of course, from the same sources, alike inherited from the ancient pre-Reformation Church. Stay-at-home Scotsmen may marvel that this last crumb of information should be accounted worth while imparting. If they knew us in our home they would understand it to be quite urgently so—that is, if English folk generally were very much interested in things outside their immediate orbit, which is not, of course, the case. Those who are will not need telling such elementary facts about the Church of Scotland. Those who are not—nine out of ten, that is to say—will not in the least care to be told, but continue to cherish a vague conception of a nation of dissenters dominated in religious matters by ministers and elders whose ferocious sabbatarianism is partially redeemed by the wealth of good stories of which they are the genial heroes.

The style of the work in Coldingham Church is very

[1] Occasionally, but less often I believe than formerly, two or more selected ministers officiate in turn, and the choice between them then falls upon the congregation.

beautiful, being elaborate transition Norman. The exterior of the north side shows an upper storey of eight single-light lancet windows, divided from one another by broad shallow buttresses. Each window has deep head-mouldings, springing from banded circular shafts with floreated capitals. The lower storey, to use an expressive but unprofessional term, consists of an arcading merely, of Norman arches arranged in couplets. The same arrangement is practically continuous round the east end, the other original portion of the church, while the two restored sides of course correspond externally. At each corner is a slender square tower, barely higher than the walls, with a low pointed cap. The roof is a low flattish gable, and the building at first sight, even to an eye familiar with remnants of mediæval churches, is undeniably perplexing.

Within the building there has been no attempt, in the restoration of the two vanished walls, to reproduce the elaborate beauty of their ancient predecessors, nor indeed could the worthy heritors of the parish have been expected to put their hands so deep into their pockets as this effort would have entailed. Nor does it really much matter; the beauty lies in the work, its singularity and antiquity, not in the building as such, since it is a mere fragment of the original, shorn of its accessories, and without its proper complements. An open arcade, in the thickness of the wall, is carried round on a level with the windows, making a kind of triforium, sufficient for perambulation. The faces of the arches, which are in couplets between the windows, are deeply moulded, while the arcading of the lower compartment is extremely rich and ornate. That the pewing and modern fittings are those of an unadorned Scottish village kirk may have passing interest in the contrast between the unreformed Presbyterian attitude

St. Abbs.

towards beauty in Divine worship and that of their ancestors. Two or three mortuary stones of early monks survive. Outside, a solitary Norman arch, a relic of the south transept, is all that is conspicuous, though the remains of the walls and foundations of the monastery buildings are in part plain enough. About a century ago the supposed skeleton of an immured nun was found in a niche in a part of the walls that was being removed.

Now you may find a Scotsman in any part of England, but a southern Englishman other than a domestic in a lowland country village is an amazing curiosity. I have only encountered such a spectacle once in my life, and that, too, in the surprising situation of beadle to a Scottish kirk. For on repairing to the cottage where I was informed that functionary at Coldingham had his abode, I was confronted by a young middle-aged south countryman, and upon my astonished ears, attuned for many weeks to the Doric accents of the Lowlander, there fell the unmistakable and more dulcet notes of a west-country Englishman. Our friend, it transpired, was a native of Gloucestershire, and, to his lasting honour, had volunteered for the South African war, when, drifting into a Scottish corps, he had returned home with his companions-in-arms to share in their well-merited honours as a Scottish hero. A likely situation offering itself on the disbanding of the corps, he had proceeded from that to the beadleship of this Scottish kirk, and in addition to the acquirements demanded by that semi-sacred office, had gathered those elements of mediæval ecclesiology that in this particular one were in frequent demand. The transition from a west-country trooper to a Scottish Presbyterian official struck me as altogether delightful, but I did not, of course, betray my appreciation from this point of view, particularly as I

seemed to detect a becoming sense of gravity in my versatile cicerone. I merely asked him how he got along, to which he replied, "First rate." I touched gently on the difference in ritual. "It ain't very different from our own, sir." After all, no more it is nowadays, assuredly not for an honest, simple soul unvexed by traditional accessories. Indeed the porch of a Scotch parish church would go far to reconcile any sound Anglican to trifling discrepancies within doors. For here are all the familiar notices fluttering on the walls that speak so comfortingly and eloquently of Church and State, of one venerable rallying-place of social and religious order, one link with the past still intact from the raging of schismatics, the onslaught of socialistic dreamers and schemers. Here are the familiar lists of game-licence holders and ratepayers, the latest royal proclamation, the notices of parish minister or Territorial colonel, which, whether in Scotland or in England, always seem to me so pleasantly if delusively suggestive that all is yet well.

A mile of lane leads you from Coldingham to the rocky cove where the quaint and characteristic fishing hamlet of St. Abb's lies tucked beneath the first uplifting of that tremendous headland. Here, as everywhere else on this inhospitable shore, the rage of the sea is held back at one point by a massive breakwater, behind which a sheltered harbour gives refuge to the red-sailed smacks and open cobbles that the village contributes to the great fishing fleet of the North Sea. Away to the south-east spreads Coldingham Bay, rocky and reef-ribbed, but the one low-lying interlude of the Berwickshire coast, with Eyemouth in the neck of its further horn. Farms and habitations lie thinly scattered behind it, and here and there a smart summer residence, whose owner is almost certain to hail from Edinburgh.

To the north-westward, on the left hand is a mighty wall of old Silurian rock falling sheer into the sea and thrusting out huge fragments to meet the waves. Beyond is chaos and a long succession of horrors from the sea-going point of view. It would be a calm sea indeed that would tempt any roving craft landward till it reached the Lothian coast.

Two or three terraces upon the high ground, with offshoots straggling over the broken declivities seawards, comprise the village of St. Abb's. If its architecture is not idyllic, the whole air of the place, fortuitously cast by nature in so rugged a setting, makes this of less consequence. Coldingham is the annual resort of a few quiet summer visitors from Edinburgh, who, with the exception of the owners of some private villas, must be possessed of the happy uncritical temperament that I am quite sure pertains to the middle-class Scotsman (or perhaps I should say Scotswoman) in this particular. Another handful of still more adventurous people of the same type perch themselves at St. Abb's, where the accommodation is of a far more *al fresco* description. But if rocks and sky and sea can anywhere make up for narrow quarters and ingenuous cookery, they have here their reward. The fishermen in such sequestered havens, with the freshness of their absorbing and daring life still untouched by contact with a vulgarising world, are themselves worth cultivating, and far better company for a sane being than negro minstrels or brass bands. The Scot of the sea, like his fellow of the Northumbrian coast, has no touch with the Scot of the land. For generations they have lived apart, though the barrier of late years has weakened, and local ethnologists, as in Northumberland, will trace them to different stocks. The Gaelic Scot of the western coast, such as the Englishman

generally sees, and that we all hear a great deal more than enough about, is both a fisherman and a farmer, and conspicuously inefficient at both. The Teutonic Scot of the east is either a first-class fisherman or a first-class farmer (or rather farm labourer, a profession in these parts far above in standing and in comfort the level of the western crofter). But he is rarely both, and his respective ancestors have nearly always been in the same trade. The last occasion on which I spent a few hours at St. Abb's, striking evidence was exhibited of the peacefulness of its inhabitants—proved, so to speak, by negation. I was standing on the high terraced road looking down upon the harbour, where a smack or two were landing their freight and crew, when of a sudden I became aware that the village was in a state of electricity. Fisher wives and fisher girls, abandoning their brooms and ovens, burst from a score of doorways and gathered on the many points of vantage commanding the little harbour, cackling loudly with that peculiar note of satisfaction which with the poor suggests that something exhilaratingly unpleasant for somebody else is going forward. Other natives of both sexes, and also visitors with winged feet at the bare thought of something happening at St. Abb's, scurried at best pace down the rocky ways towards the sea. I thought perhaps a boat had upset, and vainly scanned the then placid waters of the little rock-bound bay for some sign of misadventure. A heated matron, however, came panting by at this moment, and in response to my inquiry pointed to the quay below, and with such breath as she could spare explained in three fateful words the cause of all this upsetting. "Yon's a fecht!" And taking note of the direction indicated, I espied a turmoil of the nature of a Rugby football scrimmage on the pier, which through my

glasses revealed the fact that most of the surging group were not themselves combatants, but wrestling to keep the peace between the actual gladiators. Anon the word "police" was tossed up the village from lip to lip, and in due course the Coldingham policeman, summoned by telephone, dashed into the town on the top gear of his bicycle, and descended to the scene of the now apparently terminated encounter. When he breasted the hill again in company with a dishevelled, shame-faced being the town learned, probably with much more disappointment than relief, that peace was once again restored. Its disturber, I gathered, was a fisherman from Eyemouth of militant temperament, who, having landed with a drappie in his e'e, determined to clean out the town, and, beginning with the first man he saw on the quay, at once met his match. Hence the prolonged encounter and this stirring ten minutes for St. Abb's.

CHAPTER III

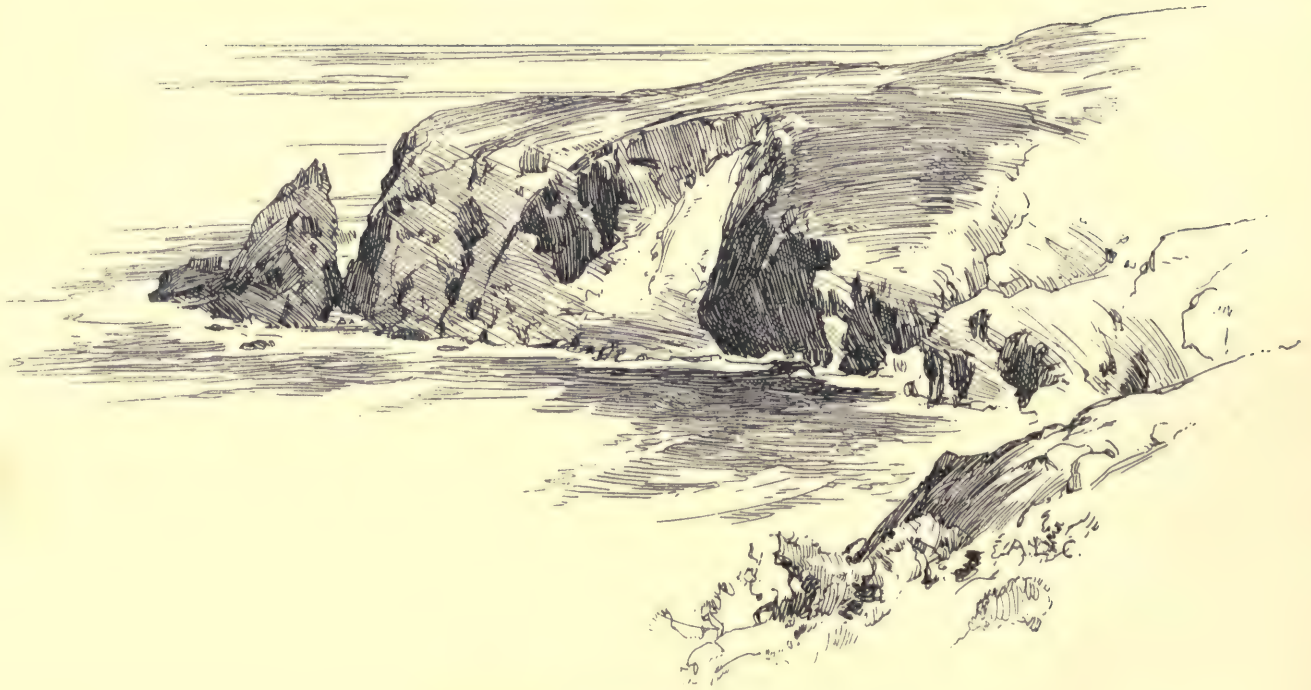
THE SEA FRONT OF THE LAMMERMOORS

THE dark volcanic mass which springs suddenly from the jagged red sandstone ledges that glow along the fringe of Coldingham Bay and thrusts out a high precipitous front into the waves, is the beginning of that grim and inhospitable barrier which for mile after mile the eastern flank of the Lammermoors presents to the North Sea. This high, broken-featured parallelogram, which actually forms the promontory of St. Abb's, its first instalment, is as strangely fashioned within as it is without. In other words, a deep valley divides it from the mainland, wherein lie sheltered from the storms of ocean the fresh waters of Coldingham Loch, whence fantastic turf-clad, cone-shaped hills forge seaward, to fall as if a knife had sheared them off abruptly, to the surf below.

Near the brink, till within the last century, there survived the remains of an ancient cell, probably of either the present or the original Priory of Coldingham. A gleam of white where the green down and the dark precipice meet at their highest point marks the lighthouse station, while on a giddy pinnacle projecting from it, approached by a narrow footway that without its protecting rails would be unnegotiable in wind or darkness, is the powerful light itself that flares over the outer approaches to the Firth of Forth. Far below the sea rumbles in eerie coves and caves, or surges round gigantic stacks of rock, white with the sea-fowl, for

which these inaccessible crags have been always noted. For the light-headed wight afflicted with giddiness, or with the much more unaccountable impulse to leap into space, this whole outstanding bit of coast has obvious disadvantages, and would be singularly intimidating. For to grasp the full significance of its rock scenery it is almost necessary to crane a trifle over the brink; so, however steady your head, it is equally advisable that your feet should be well nailed.

The colouring of the rocks, though giving a general impression of sombre brown, is in detail singularly rich in blended hues of brown and orange and red with splashes of green where the moist lichens cling, while the black mouths of sunless caves about their base open and shut with the surging of the tide. About on the high ridges and deep dells of turf into which the St. Abb's promontory has been so strangely fashioned you may see on most August days a few odd visitors from the adjoining hamlet taking their ease upon the grass or peering fearfully over the cliff edges. But along the high uplifted coast-line that opens to view on topping the lighthouse ridge, buttress behind buttress, precipice behind precipice, with the range of hills above hanging in places like a green curtain to the brink of the cliffs, you may at any season beat your laborious way in solitude for many a mile. Halfway to the distant dip of this high and sombre sea front to the low red sandstone cliffs of East Lothian the fang-like ruins of Fast Castle, clinging to their narrow ledge of rock, stand finely thrust out above the waves. All the way there from St. Abb's, and indeed far beyond, the full tides lash the base of the cliffs, and in a gale make fearsome play among the jagged spurs and titanic stacks of rock that push out to meet the breakers and goad them to greater fury. As the tide ebbs one looks down



St. Abb's Head.

from the cliff's dizzy brink on the chaos of submerged rock and reef and the hard gridironed floor of ocean, showing its teeth, as it were, through the translucent water; while on the comb of the dry jagged ridges, thrust far out above the waves, marking their indentations like an undulating string of pearls, sit countless sea-fowl, far enough here from all world's alarms, but a solitary shepherd on the overhanging cliff or a fishing cobble from St. Abb's drifting by when the tide is high and the waves at rest. Below Outlaw Hill there is a short rift in the cliffs and a clearly marked zigzag track known to the farm people above as the Smuggler's Path. It leads down to a patch of firm sand to which a boat can be brought in and beached, and a more sequestered haven no heart of smuggler could have desired. Two miles beyond, and at the most remote and solitary point of all these Lammermoor cliffs, stands the supposititious refuge of the last Ravenswood, as grim a perch in wild weather as it is within the power of language to describe. Forty years ago I saw it in the month of April in a north-easter, and under lowering skies; this time an August sun was shining radiantly down on an almost motionless sea.

But to explore this long stretch of cliffs from St. Abb's or Coldingham and enjoy the full measure of their grandeur, whether in storm or sunshine, and to compass Fast Castle with the wild coast beyond it, would be more than a comfortable day's undertaking. For myself, I made the world-famous eyrie of the Master of Ravenswood the object of a special pilgrimage, and took a back road from Coldingham which, after a preliminary progress through normal scenes, began to assume that suspicious air of having completed its period of public service, and, in short, to relapse into the irresponsible character of a farm lane. I make note

of this here, lest some pilgrim, encouraged by a yellow trail on the map, might rashly assume that a cycle would lighten his labours for much of the way or, at any rate, provide him with an alternative homeward route. To be candid, I had the latter object in view myself, and, acting upon it, was confronted by a hiatus of some three miles; for the passable byway of the map resolved itself into a deep-rutted cart track wending its fenceless way through rolling solitudes of ripening barley and sheep pastures. Though of no great consequence on a long August day, the fact may be set down for the benefit of any it might concern who take these things hardly. I was strengthened, moreover, in my quite reasonable faith in the map by the eloquent encouragement of a venerable native of Coldingham, whose unsupported evidence I should never have accepted. For the views of a man whose normal method of travel is on foot or in a farm cart I know by experience to be unreliable.

This sea fringe of the Coldingham country would have interest enough for any lover of the past for its association with the great Border monastery, its commerce, its misadventures in the ceaseless warfare, its splendid hospitalities, and its agricultural records. And all these things are accessible to the curious reader. Indifferent and impassable as is now the way, it was constantly travelled in the days of old by men and women who have made history. Kings, queens, ambassadors, great nobles, all have been brought over it at one time or another to dine and sleep, in modern phraseology, at Fast Castle on their way to Edinburgh, and duly astonished they must each and all have been when they got there. Roads meant nothing to them on their ambling nags so long as mud and mire didn't hold them fast. They didn't jog or pound after the

fashion of a modern saddle-horse, who this long time only used for fast work and artificial purposes, has lost such gaits as were looked for in the old roadsters and that alone made all-day travelling easy and tolerable for men and women. Nay, in good company and reasonable weather, we may be quite sure it was more actually enjoyable and exhilarating than any of those more expeditious methods of transport on which we plume ourselves because they save labour and time. The well-trained utility saddle-horse of other days, whether those of Elizabeth or George II., tittupped along at an amble or a running walk of five miles an hour in good weather, picking out the best beaten tracks in the rough dirt highway, and with gliding motion and a sense of comfort to his rider that I think would surprise a man familiar only with the modern English horse, unequalled on the race-course or the hunting-field, but generally barbarous in his slow paces.

I venture to speak sympathetically from the ancient's point of view on the strength of a protracted experience in a well-known old Anglo-Saxon colony that, save for some generally unavailable railroads, was in matter of roads and methods of locomotion precisely that of early Georgian or Tudor England, and, what is more, perfectly content to be. And having travelled in all many thousand miles in this old-time fashion—not as a fancy, but because it was the usual and speediest method, I like to recall it as far and away the most delightful, healthful, and sociable method of travelling. When the modern writer on old manners and customs talks of the hardships of road travel, as regards my lord's coach-and-six or the humble chaise, he is hardly emphatic enough. For he has almost certainly never seen unmetalled roads abandoned to regular wheel traffic in all weathers in his life, and would find a great difficulty

in actually picturing to himself what even the Great North Road from York to Berwick or from Berwick to Edinburgh was like. With a due regard to his historical fact, he gives the average rate of a coach or chariot as three miles an hour in winter if not mired altogether, and four and a half in summer, but he cannot hold the reins in fancy as the present writer can do. When it comes to sympathy with the horseback people, who were practically all the well-to-do, when they could possibly avoid wheels, he is a good deal at fault, and again in expressing surprise at the long stages the women used to accomplish. I will undertake to say Queen Mary would have ridden from Coldingham to Edinburgh and have felt less fatigue, and that, too, of a more wholesome kind, after her nine hours in the saddle than a lady of to-day would experience after as many hours in a train: I would not cite Queen Mary as an example, though any other would do as well, since that ill-used lady was notoriously fond of riding, and, when in health, as hard as nails. I am quite sure these horseback travellers enjoyed themselves much, in reasonably fine weather, as do their almost precise equivalents of to-day, moving easily and with the gentle but brisk action of the rapid walking or smoothly running roadster of a pattern long extinct in this country. It would be delightful to follow it in Britain to-day if there were no railways nor macadamised roads nor lightning wheel traffic of every kind. But as things are, it would be flat and unprofitable, while off the roads our island is the finest all-round walking country in the world. I began myself to wish that I had trusted to my legs alone on this August day when I reached the rather solitary homestead of Lumsdaine, where my lane pethered out and gave up all pretension of further service.

But Lumsdaine, though to the passing eye but an upland Berwickshire homestead of the more modest type, suggested both in name and situation something

Near St. Abb's.

more than that. So the next time I was at Berwick—which, though an English town, as the reader will by this time have heard often enough, is in one way and another the repository of most of the hidden things of

the Eastern March—I sought for light, when Lumsdaine revealed itself as a place of very ancient fame indeed, the cradle, in short, of a family whose descendants, or presumably such, one encounters all over the English-speaking world. The old Lumsdaines seem to have gripped a wide slice of this bare windy country before the Coldingham Benedictines had squatted near them and got most of what was left, and to have resisted those insidious encroachments which by spiritual intimidation and unflinching persistency a powerful monastery could usually achieve on the lands of their lay neighbours. There were many warrior Lumsdaines, one of whom seems to have been constantly making his peace with Edward I. There were also archdeacons, which seems natural enough in such an ecclesiastical atmosphere. Once, however, there is a note of concession to the neighbouring monks. A Lumsdaine of Lumsdaine is revealed as making a meritorious attempt to save through their friendly offices the head of his grandfather, who had got into trouble. But the Lumsdaines were a tenacious and acquisitive race. In the latter character they got quite early a grant of the richer and broader acres of Buncle, and naturally shifted their residence from this wind-swept plateau to the more engaging banks of the Whiteadder, where the shell of their pele tower may be seen to-day in the garden of Blanerne House. Of their tenacity, it is sufficient to say that their descendants are still in possession. The pele tower and village of Lumsdaine itself, however, have long vanished, burned by Sir George Douglas nearly three hundred years ago. To-day there is nothing to give a passing wayfarer any hint of its past. A whistling hind was bestriding one of a pair of Clydesdales on his way to the plough; a couple of misdoubting collies with their bristles erect, and a buxom, broad-beamed hind's

wife working at a pump-handle, who informed me it was " nae road for a byke to Dowlaw."

Dowlaw, I found later, was also an ancient Lumsdaine possession. At the moment it was represented by a lonely homestead on the far horizon, to which the trace of a track, cloven, as it afterwards proved, by deep cart ruts, could be descried mounting the hills—the only touch of humanity on a strange, tumbling waste of waving barley climbing landwards to the heathy ramparts of Coldingham Moor and seawards slipping away over great pastures to the brink of the cliffs. When the Scotsman of the eastern lowlands makes up his mind to plough the waste, he is no man of half measures. There are no outposts of cottar farmers scratching away tentatively and picturesquely at the edge of the moorlands, as is usual in the western and wilder parts of England. The farmer of these Border counties is a capitalist dealing in large figures, large flocks, or broad acres. When you do find a high-lying tract, not long since a waste of heather, bracken, or moss, laid under cultivation, the oats or barley are no patchwork of such varied efforts as an unassisted and begrudging soil may present when harvest approaches. Whether to loss or gain, whatever the crop, means are taken to secure at least a respectable, healthy, and even plant.

The generous and courageous treatment of the land that answered so well in the past, which even now, let us hope, is not unprofitable, and made Eastern Scotland what it is, is applied to the upland wastes when they seem worthy to be touched at all. If the crop is relatively light, it is at least level and healthy and the powder beneath is evident. The result may conceivably represent a loss of a hundred or two pounds—defeat in such case, but not disgrace. Nor would such a rebuff, I am quite sure, shake the Merse or Lothian farmer in the

faith of his immediate forbears that land is not worth treating at all unless it is well done. Our little friend who is scratching away at the edge of the moors in many delightful Arcadies we wot of and making a living, may on the other hand lose nothing at all in hard cash by his unassisted attenuated crop. But such a display would not do here. It would be a worse thing to the self-respect of the Scot of this type than the loss of his money, and this, I think, fairly represents the spirit of Lothian Scotland, though I dare say few readers in a country like ours, so disproportionately given over to bricks and mortar in all the serious concerns of life, will really care a button whether it does or not. But this frequent contact of the wide-sweeping, well-nurtured crop with the heathery brae or the rocky glen is characteristic of Southern Scotland, and might even be accounted against it from an æsthetic standpoint. That lush and tangled and many-coloured border line between the wild and the neat we love so well in many of our English Highlands is not often tolerated under a system which might be roughly summed up in the word *thorough*.

Here, between Lumsdaine and Dowlaw, great sweeping breadths of barley that in a week would be alive with harvesters, spread to the shaggy ramparts of Coldingham Moor. From a rocky gorge in its low ridge comes spouting a moorland burn, which in the course of ages has cut the remarkable chasm known as Dowlaw Dene, and for near a mile tumbles through the cropped fields to the sea between crags and walls of rock ; its waters lost to sight, deep buried amid a bristling frieze of tangled foliage, a very paradise for birds in a rather naked region. And it is interesting to hear that the ring-ousel so reluctant to herd, so unsociable as it is when settled on our own hilltops, rests here in great

flocks after its long sea voyage in the spring. As the track crossed the rude bridge near the head of the dene, a kingfisher scudded down into the tangled maze, while incidentally a glimpse of blue water showed between the gash in the cliff through which this rollicking little burn, that in its short career had cut so amazingly deep into the sandstone, broke out upon the shore.

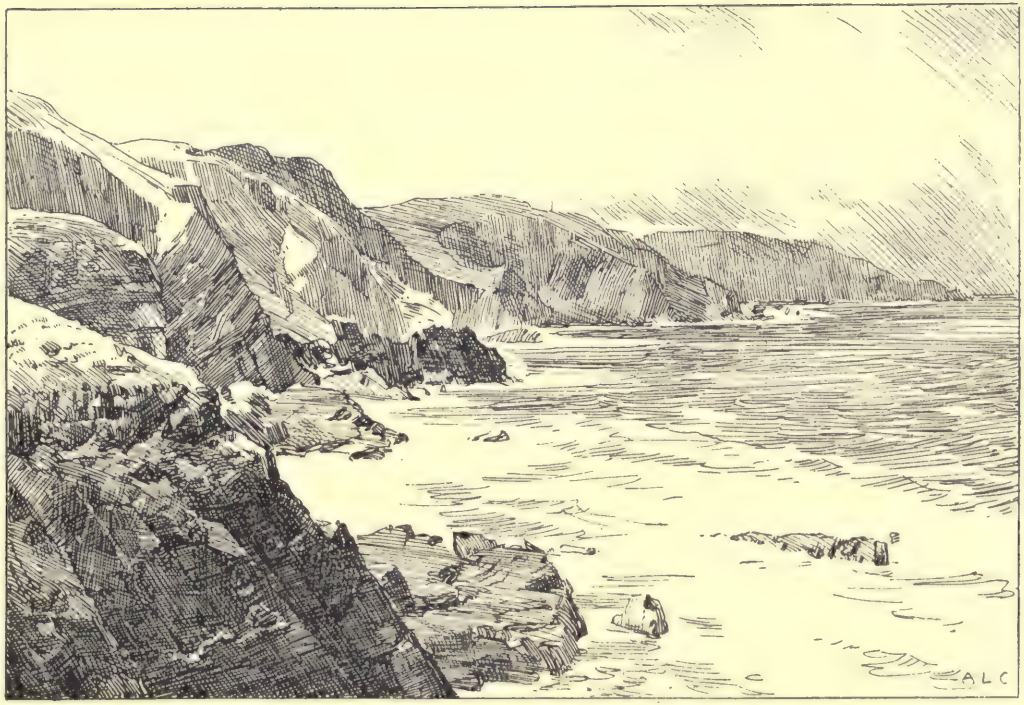
As it happened, this was the 12th of August, and the local sportsmen had obviously lost no time, for in the moveless air the rip-rapping of guns had been sounding faintly all morning from behind the ridges which concealed the long heathery sweeps of Coldingham Moor. Lumsdaine is tolerably secluded, but Dowlaw stands in really fine uplifted solitude. Naked and unadorned it perches upon a windy plateau girt about by a wide tracery of stone dykes straggling landward to the ramparts of the moor and seawards, enclosing lonely pastures that dip to the lonelier cliffs a short mile distant.

Heartily sick of my bicycle, having pushed it for an hour along the rough crown of the farm road, churned by the iron toes of Clydesdales dragging their heavy-laden wheels through the deep ruts, I now shoved it with relief into a cart shed, a proceeding viewed with menacing suspicion by a pack of collies, who appeared to be in possession of the premises. But, if the personal note will be forgiven, I really felt some heart-stirring as I knocked at the door of this lonesome abode. Forty years agone, in round figures, I had applied my knuckles to this identical portal with the same intent. The thought occurred too, whether by some strange combination of tenacity in both life and tenure, the same individual would respond to the summons, and perform the same small act of civility. Obviously not, for the

young woman who indicated the way to the castle was unquestionably neither born nor thought of at that remote epoch. That had been a great day for me. *Ah! quam dulce est meminesse!* I had come up with a friend from East Lothian for a few days' fishing in that idyllic and then prolific little trouting stream, the Eye, which any traveller to Edinburgh by the Northern Mail, who may chance to be awake at the moment, must surely have noticed twisting for miles in and out of the line where it drives through the wooded passes of the Lammermoor spurs. We were stopping at the little inn kept then, and indeed until his quite recent demise, by that same Grant whom the North British railroad has fortuitously immortalised in the station and village of Grant's House. From a tender age I had been, if a lowly, an ardent devourer of Scott's novels. As of southern rearing, I came in ripe years to congratulate myself no little on some inscrutable instinct that had drawn me most to the volumes which dealt with the author's native atmosphere, and that to one reading of those usually commended to youth, *Ivanhoe*, *The Talisman*, and the like, I gave two to *The Antiquary*, *Guy Mannering*, *Redgauntlet*, and above all, rather oddly, to *The Bride of Lammermoor*, which most enthralled me. But it is enough for the moment that I had secretly determined, whatever the mood of the fish, to desert my companion at Grant's House for one of our precious days, and make my way to that mysterious wave-beaten stronghold which of all Scott's scenes had held a foremost place in my dreams. A raging north-easter made the sacrifice to the demands of sport almost a nominal one, while as to those of companionship, my friend resolutely rejected the trifle of a dozen miles on such a hare-brained quest as a ruined castle, a not unreasonable attitude at one-and-twenty. So I left

him to his unprofitable task of flogging the steely grey waters in a harsh whistling wind, and set off in its teeth over the enclosed upland and out on to the barren sweeps of Coldingham Moor. And I well remember how greatly it surprised me then, as it would surprise any stranger to-day of reasonable observation, to find the Lammermoors, held as they are in the toils of pastoral agriculture for so broad a belt, breaking out again at a height of only seven or eight hundred feet into their primitive condition as they approach the sea. At any rate, I pressed my way across the windy moor amid the cries of the then nesting grouse, and without any noteworthy adventure hit off the homestead at whose threshold I am knocking again in these pages. The other was in truth a better day for Fast Castle than this present one. A place of savage aspect, and, yet more, one that is eloquent of a great and mournful tragedy, is seen to better purpose in savage weather than under summer skies and a tranquil sea. It was an opportunity, too, this present one, not often vouchsafed, to make an effort at recalling the fresh, unfaded fancies of youth, when a yet small world held mysteries that have terribly faded. "Wolf's Crag" seemed a prodigiously realistic spot at that time of life, and the influence and sentiment of the physical side or, in the favourite modern phrase, of "environment," as a background to the printed page was, I think, abnormally strong within me, and still, I am happy to say, if impaired by the years, still defies them. But if memory on this present occasion failed in little else, it failed, as was inevitable, to catch anything but faint echoes of that spring-time of the fancy.

Moreover, it failed in keeping me on the correct line through the enclosed pasture fields, for there is no path down to the castle. Perhaps my attention under



Between St. Abb's and Fast Castle.

the circumstances was not sufficiently fixed on the various gates and dyke-sides indicated by my informant. The contrast between the then and the now, memory at any rate bore home to me. On the first occasion I was obviously regarded as a feckless loon wandering across the moors to such an outpost of civilisation on a wild day to see a few fragments of crumbling wall—for Fast Castle was not in those days, I think, an object of pilgrimage, nor indeed is it greatly so now. But this time at least the lassie didn't eye me with suspicion as a lunatic or my quest as unaccountable, and, indeed, I felt quite grateful in the end for the inattention which had compelled me to scale the steep sides of many high stone dykes and eventually to hit off the brink of these precipitous cliffs a mile or two to the westward of the castle crag. For where the Dowlaw husbandman ceases to vex with plough and harrow the cold upland in the due order of his four-course shift, if such he follows, lest plough and team and all should slither down into the sea 500 feet below, I found a curtain of crisp heather in the full radiant glory of its bloom sweeping sharply down for perhaps half the descent and spreading far to the right and left along the brink of the cliffs. It lay, indeed, at so sharp an angle that the seeming fringe of this purple mantle, almost dazzling in colour beneath the glory of a noonday sun, was always within a dozen paces during the descent, and lay in striking contrast against the shimmer of the motionless sea far below. Bare turf would have been altogether too precarious a foothold on such a declivity, which threatened every moment to terminate with significant abruptness.

So bearing away at an angle for some distance, the fall of the steeps proved less intimidating, and eventually I found myself far to the westward of my quest, wading laboriously in heather no longer little more than ankle

deep, but waist high and covering a long rolling shelf between the steep of the hill and the brink of the cliffs, now obvious enough below with their knotty brows. If it was not a day for Fast Castle in its dramatic and pathetic character of "Wolf's Crag," it was the day of the summer. Over this heavy tangled mantle of a dazzling radiancy, such as for a few days under favourable lights heather can achieve, and strewn in this case with outcrops of grey rock, the whole breadth of the Firth of Forth with all its historic landmarks lay clear and distinct in the calm of a windless day. And that is a combination which you may sometimes wait a month for on the east coast of Scotland. Not for clear skies, which in truth are frequent enough, but no lips in these parts would ever crack through whistling for a wind!

Beyond the purple foreground to the westward, the last four miles of the high Coldinghamshire coast dipped gradually to the bend, where, leaving the wooded glories of the Pease Burn, the coast of Lothian could be seen laying its curving low red ramparts for miles against the blue sea. Dunbar, its site at least, was visible, and the Bass Rock, grim and massive, like some uncanny monster squatting on the quiet deep, while its *vis-à-vis*, the sharp sugar-loaf cone of North Berwick Law, marked far away the lost line of the shore. All along the horizon rolled high in air the billowy coast of Fife, while in mid-sea the desolate Isle of May spread her long low form. All this was in truth familiar enough. But when, in search of my immediate object, I had scrambled down to the edge of the cliff and out on to a pulpit rock that might almost have carried another Wolf's Crag, there sprung out, sure enough, to the eastward the unforgettable spur of cliff crowned with the fang-like remnants of Fast Castle a full mile away.

It was a lonely enough scene even now, howsoever bright the sunshine or blue the sea or purple the heather, and no trace of humanity discernible, though perhaps the day and week of all the year in which some stray adventurer might have broken away from one or other holiday haunt. The sea-gulls swooped and screamed, the peewits cried and circled round on drubbing wings, a sheep bleated among the heather or from the rocky knowes above, while conies innumerable scuttled along the broken cliff edges, along which I lost no time in following an at times precarious track.

There at last it lay below me, a green hollow parting the cliffs down to the level of the castle rock, the obvious approach which alone had made it possible as a human abode. To-day these cruel cliffs, springing abruptly from still more cruel reefs, were looking as genial as could be expected of any north-fronting precipice which glowers in shadow nearly all day long. And the sea was uttering but a gentle growl with only such accompaniments as were inevitable to the mere swing of an unruffled tide over so broken and jagged a floor. On that other occasion a half gale had been blowing beneath a brooding sky, and the North Sea raging fearsomely upon its channelled bed, and hurling its waves with angry roar in spouting columns of foam high up the grizzly cliffs. All about this weird retreat of the Master of Ravenswood was then wind and tumult, gloom and uproar. It was in truth an eerie scene, and remains with me to this day. So also does a sensation of not wholly unwelcome "creepiness" remain in memory. For the wind was then so high that even careless youth descended to hands and knees in negotiating the narrow ridge three or four feet wide which connects the castle rock with the mainland, short as is the transit. To-day one stepped across it without any

such tremors, though I think I would readily have experienced them to see that sight again.

Soon afterwards in that same year the ruin was struck by lightning and some thirty feet of wall shattered and overturned. It bears no resemblance to any old sea-coast fortress in Britain known to me, assuredly not to any of those other splendid relics of feudal power that still defy the ages on this same old fighting shore. Bamburgh, Dunstanburgh, Tantallon rise in still noble piles or noble fragments of what once were such on conspicuous perches above the waves. But neither they nor yet Holy Island nor Dunbar have the glamour of forlorn and gloomy isolation that gives this one such unique fascination. On the contrary, they are proud and conspicuous landmarks over wide breadths of land and sea. Fast Castle, again, was a comparatively small fortress, though of curious importance, and its remnants are insignificant. On its pulpit perch, some eighty feet above the waves, it is overshadowed by beetling cliffs and in situation far removed from any sign or track of man. Supplies must at all times have come on horseback, while stables, on which Scott, it will be remembered, made considerable demands on one or two occasions, must assuredly have been on the mainland. The narrow platform, about forty feet wide and perhaps thrice as long, still bears some of the outer walls, with the remains of a square tower, all cleverly wrought into the face of the cliff and showing no further sign of decay. It is, in truth, an almost incredible place of abode, though for long periods of time it unquestionably was so. Its limitations detract nothing whatever from the real awesomeness of the situation. But what kind of nights—aye, and days too—in the winter storms must its often distinguished inmates have led!—for after all they were not coastguards, but essentially landsmen.

Sir Archibald Geikie, the famous geologist, has paid fine tribute to these "highest sea-cliffs on the eastern seaboard of Britain." He describes how St. Abb's Head, being a mass of porphyry, shows by its outstanding situation its greater resistance to the rage of the sea than the equally hard-looking but more yielding cliffs of the silurian greywacke that continue the high Berwickshire sea front. "We see from the wasted and worn look of these cliffs what a sore battle they have had to fight with the ocean. Craggy rocks, isolated stacks, and sunken skerries, that once formed part of the line of cliff, are now enveloped by the restless waves. Long twilight caves, haunted by otters and seamews and flocks of rock pigeons, have been hollowed out of the flat carboniferous sandstone and the contorted silurian greywacke, and are daily filled by the tides. In storms these vast precipices from base to summit are buried in foam. The pebbles and boulders, even in the sheltered beaches, are rolled back by the recoil of the breakers and hurled forward again, with almost the force and noise of heavy cannon." When I stood here in youth amid the whistling of the wind and the raging of the surf, Edgar Ravenswood naturally held the foremost place, to the partial subordination of the humours of the immortal Caleb. The scene of the storm which drove Lord Ashton and his daughter down from their hunting on Coldingham Moor to this temporary harbourage with the lover and the hereditary foe was, of course, absorbingly realistic amid the tumult which raged so opportunely beneath the roofless walls. But Ravenswood, it is ill denying, was a precociously morbid and pessimistic young man for his very tender years, though the political and religious rancours which distracted Scotland in the seventeenth century might perhaps account for any measure of vindictive hatred.

And if he comes to us now as a rather bloodless tragedy hero, yet as the central one of a great drama one admits he sufficiently fills the part, and loyally brushes aside his perhaps slightly colourless personality, amid the more flesh-and-blood actors that fill some of the other parts. At any rate, the figure of Ravenswood is one that has trodden the boards of Europe for half a century, which fact alone must give some peculiar interest to this lonely storm-beaten little ruin-crowned crag.[1] Caleb's inimitable resourcefulness gets something of a jar here if you are unwise enough to attempt to reconcile topography with his humorous raids on behalf of the empty larder at Wolf's Crag. No settlement of fishermen deep set in coves, as many of these fishing hamlets are, have ever found foothold between St. Abb's headland and Cockburnspath. But when we have paid our tribute to the Wolf's Crag appeal of Fast Castle, which few people, I fancy, even in Scotland, see otherwise than in dreams, the actual and historical side of the fortress holds the visitor on terms with such things a good deal longer.

"A veil of dark mystery," wrote the historian of Coldingham nearly a century ago, "hangs over its early story, corresponding well with the gloomy solitude of its situation." We need not follow him in his endeavours to grasp its faint threads. It is enough for us that it was equipped and garrisoned as a national fortress in the fourteenth century and captured by that brave knight of Norfolk, Sir Robert Benhale, a few days after Halidon Hill, where his conspicuous valour will be recalled. It is curious that the battle of Halidon Hill should have occasioned the first temporary occupation of Fast Castle by the English, and that of Homildon Hill

[1] In a recent well-known book on Scotland, the author makes note that in visiting Germany, the first question many Germans ask him relates to "Wolf's Crag" and its environment.

the second. For it was during these campaigns of Hotspur's on behalf of Henry IV., not yet his foe, in which his Border Welsh archers, the best then in Britain, won the last-mentioned battle, that the cliff fortress once more succumbed to fear of starvation, as from its position we may safely assume. No regular assault was possible, for what is now a causeway four or five feet wide, built up from a lower level with rocks, was then a gap over which a drawbridge swung. It seems to have been held for some years by the English, and for part of the time by one Holden, who varied the monotony of life by far-reaching raids in the neighbourhood, to which those of old Caleb were mild indeed. These were no doubt directed at the fat plain of East Lothian, and so exasperated Patrick Dunbar of Beil, still a notable seat in that county, that with "a hundred hardie followers" he caught Holden napping and by some means seized the castle in the night. The English had apparently had enough of the place by this time, and it was never again out of Scottish hands.

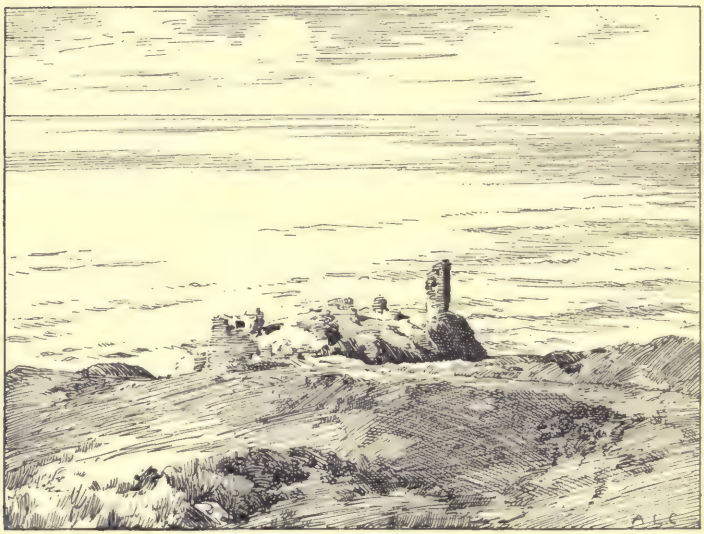
It was now for a long time the property of the Homes, the great family, with its many ramifications, of the Eastern March, in those days, as one might almost say it is in these. That people who held high office under Scottish Kings and had castles in the fair Merse could have spent much time in this eagle's eyrie is incredible, though Sir Patrick Home is described in documents as "of Fast Castle," and he certainly entertained King Henry's daughter Margaret on her celebrated journey to share the Scottish throne. She was well entertained there too, we know, and it may be assumed with certainty that the young lady was properly astonished at the nature of her quarters. The castle was by this time furnished with artillery, and on the young Queen's departure she was saluted with a

volley, and I should like to have heard the crash it must have made against the cliffs! The next Home of Fast Castle, Hollingshead tells us, was engaged after many foreign adventures in the service of the Grand Turk at Cairo, when he heard that the seven intervening heirs had all deceased, and that he, the adventurer in lands remote, was heir. The transition from Cairo to Fast Castle was speedily made, and must have been a sharp one. Probably the rates of insurance would have been higher in that day on the Scottish Border than in Turkey. But Cuthbert Home did not long enjoy his storm-beaten stronghold, for, following his chief and the rest of his name to Flodden, he fought with them and fell on that right wing of the Scottish army whose behaviour after a victorious opening has been a matter of mystery and controversy ever since. There was a dungeon then on the rock, for we hear of the Northumbrian, Lilburn, who helped to murder Kerr of Cessford, the Scottish Warden of the Middle March, dying in it. In the quarrels after Flodden between the Homes, with the Merse behind them against the Regent Albany, the latter captured Fast Castle. There was an old saw that ten men could hold it against all Scotland and England, but sixteen put in there by Albany disproved the saying, and the Homes got possession again—this time, however, demolishing as much as they could of it. They seem to have thought better of the matter, however, shortly afterwards, and repaired the damage. In Hertford's memorable invasion of Scotland in 1648 the English captured the castle, and the way it was recovered by the Scots, as told by Hollingshead, agrees with a familiar local tradition. For the English captain having commandeered some stores in the neighbourhood, the place of the workmen who were to convey them to the castle was taken by a band of

hardy youths, who, when they had crossed the drawbridge with their loads, set upon the garrison and held the bridge and the open door while a fresh party in hiding rushed in and completed the capture.

Queen Elizabeth's ambassador to Scotland, Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, was lodged for a night at Fast Castle in 1567, and in a letter to Cecil written from there he speaks of being treated very well "according to the nature of the place, which is fitter to lodge prisoners in than folks at liberty, for as it is very little so it is very strong." With him here was Lord Home himself, and also the most able and attractive Scotsman of his day, so admired by Elizabeth, Maitland of Lethington. The next year Patrick Home, who owned the castle, fell at Langside, fighting with all the rest of the Homes against Queen Mary, leaving but two daughters, one of whom carried the property away to Logan, the Laird of Restalrig, whose sinister character and dark doings are not ill-attuned to the spirit of the place. At any rate, he found it, by his own admission, an uncommonly convenient retreat. Logan seems generally to have been at odds with his neighbours and the world at large, including King James VI., the plot against whose life known to history as the Gowrie Conspiracy counting this evil genius of Fast Castle among its leading spirits. The castle was to have played a useful part in the proceedings, for his Majesty, after being kidnapped, was to have been brought here in a boat. Before this the laird was wanted for highway robbery, but seems to have lain snugly in his hole till the affair had blown over, which such a trifle, with so many more on a larger scale going forward on the Scottish Border, no doubt it soon did. He was also bitten with the "buried treasure" mania so common of old, or pretended to be, professing that he himself at Fast Castle

was sitting on a hidden store of it. With this infatuation he seems to have inoculated Napier of Merchiston, a great scientific philosophic gentleman of that day, to such an extent that a contract was drawn up between them binding the philosopher to use all "craft and ingyne" for extracting the said treasure, and the said contract, besides other productions of the wicked laird's,



Fast Castle.

is curious reading. Napier probably misdoubted the prudence of being swung up between sea and sky in partnership with such a tricky rogue, and backed out of the business. It seems, too, that Logan, who perhaps had soft metal to deal with, hit the philosopher very hard somewhere before he had done with him—no doubt in his pocket. For surely nothing but a money transaction would leave such a sting behind it as to make

the victim bar his tenants in their leases from ever subletting to any one bearing the very common Border name of Logan. This evil genius escaped punishment in life for his share in the plot against King James. But three years after his death his shade, or rather his actual corpse, which was exhumed for the purpose, according to Scottish law, and deposited before the judge, received the sentence of a traitor—innocuous enough to the loathsome effigy, but ruination to the innocent family, who were stripped of their three estates of Fast Castle, Restalrig, and Gunsgreen, and condemned to penury. Henceforward the story of Fast Castle, of which the reader may possibly have already had his fill, descends to the commonplace of exchange and barter among various local magnates, none of whom after the Union of the Crowns and the settlement of the Border, of the Eastern March, at any rate, would feel any attraction towards such an uncanny and inconvenient abode. It is quite in order that its eventful chronicle should flicker out with such a gruesome ceremony and such a Machiavellian owner to make way in due course for Edgar Ravenswood and Caleb Balderstone. For it will, I trust, be remembered that the wit of even Caleb in disguising the nakedness of the castle from the few who were thrown upon its hospitalities at last broke down; how in despair at the approach of his master with the great Marquis of A——, he set it on fire, meeting the sympathetic and illustrious guest with agonised mien and a sort of running inventory of the supposed valuables that were burning before their eyes, and incidentally, to keep them at a distance, of mysterious barrels of powder in the cellar.

Less than a century ago, I learn from the best living Berwickshire ornithologist, ravens made a common

nesting-ground of these terrific cliffs, and in places so inaccessible that they wrought havoc on the young lambs or sickly ewes with impunity. Ingenuous but crude methods were resorted to by the enraged flock-masters in their efforts to destroy the nests, lighted faggots attached to ropes being the most popular. The only individual, a thirsty wastrel for the price of a few gills of whisky, who ever consented to be lowered in person, stimulating thereby, the day being Sunday, the tongues of the superstitious, broke the rope, and, of course, his neck. This apparently discouraged further attempts at the only effective method till the presence of the modern gamekeeper proved more effective still. There are now no ravens left on the Lammermoors, whether in their inland fastnesses or on their grim sea front.

The grassy carpet of the castle crag, the shadow of a splintered wall, the balmy sunshine and the soft music of the sea, the wild scream of swooping sea-birds, and the weird fascination of the spot conduced to dalliance. On breasting the mile of slope, this time upon the more direct line, so fortunately, as it now seemed, overlooked in the morning, the shadows of the tall and trim stone dykes—for there was nothing else within miles to cast one—were lengthening out. The high home pastures around Dowlaw and its solitary breadth of turnip field glowed their greenest in the slant of the sun. Save for a couple of sunburnt children weaving flowers at the edge of the rough moor, the farm seemed like a place entranced by the unwonted truce with elemental strife and enjoying at the same time, one might fancy, the calm before a more welcome outburst—in other words, the lull before harvest and the impending struggle with the great sweeps of yellow barley in the vale below. Even the collies were not on

guard, so turning my face towards the drooping sun, I pursued to the bitter end the still relentless farm track of the morning along the eastern edge of Coldingham Moor.

When the end did come, however, in less than two miles, I had my reward, for we ran into the old Edinburgh coach road, which crosses the centre of the Moor, and was displaced, I fancy, about the close of the coaching period, when road travel was diverted to the line of the railroad. We struck it near the brink of the long descent to Cockburnspath and East Lothian, and before turning my back on the west it was impossible not to linger for a moment before a prospect that looked into the heart of Scotland, and across the Firth; two Lothian counties fairly gleaming in the foreground with their matchless load of ripening grain, forty miles of waving Lammermoors behind, and in the far distance, the faint outlines of Arthur's Seat and the Pentlands marking the site of Scotland's capital. More than once I had heard discerning friends descant on this fine stretch of little-travelled but still well-maintained road, that like a waving ribbon bisects the heart of Coldingham Moor. So I set my face towards the Border with a gentle breeze and the drooping sun behind me, and miles of purple heather spreading in low undulations to the right and left and ahead of me. I was in more than humour again with my bicycle, thankful for the foresight that had prompted me to risk the inconveniences of its company. On foot I should have been benighted, but now we sailed away through the purple wild with easy motion, and scarcely a pressure of the pedal over a smooth surface, which dipped and rose for miles in long successive and scarcely perceptible undulations. The day's campaign upon the Moor was over, and the uneasy grouse, after their first taste of

the enemy, were still astir, calling to lost companions, mates, or offspring, and wondering, no doubt, what evil thing had burst upon their peaceful world. The distant rumble of a train speeding through the Pass of Pease floated up in the evening air, loaded, doubtless, on this day with Southrons hasting to the Celtic regions of the north and west that mainly stand for Scotland in the south. No one should omit, if opportunity offers, a run over Coldingham Moor. One hesitates to suggest that the northern-bound motorist should swerve round this forsaken loop of the old north road, since its present course threads the delightful valleys of the Eye and the Pease Burn. But to the more habitual traveller this slight swerve may be commended. Twilight had fallen as I topped the eastern edge of the waste and dropped down through the haunts of men concerned with crops and stock to a handy station on the main line with an hour to spare. For the North British Company, it may be remarked, are not overmindful of the local traveller, and his opportunities between the fast expresses are none too frequent. However, this mattered less than nothing to-day, as there was a small hostelry replete with all the essentials not far away, a none too common object of the Scottish wayside, and breakfast had become by this time rather ancient history. Mine host, too, was a man after my own heart, a veteran of character and long memory, a sportsman, a farmer, and, among other things, a master-hand at a "crack," and when a Scotsman shines in this, and he very often does, he is hard to beat. So far as I have known both upon their native heath along the Border, he is more efficient in this particular than his ancient enemy, the Northumbrian. His Doric is richer and even racier; he has also the undoubted advantage of his R's in emphasis, when, that is to say,

there is life and character behind them. And men with a twinkling eye have always seemed to me a trifle more abundant upon the left than upon the right bank of Tweed—around the Lammermoors than along the Cheviots—dour as is the average hind in the low country of either. Mine host was suffering a little from the depression natural to an old sportsman on a festal day of the sporting calendar when some form of anno Domini or other mischance has but recently put him on the retired list. He was anxious as to the day's doings on Coldingham Moor, and the mere fact that I had been fortuitously on the edge of the scene of action and heard the firing seemed to put him in heart. As I did justice to his fare in the back parlour we talked, or rather he did mainly, of many things; of the change of the times and of customs, of crops and rents, of the glorious 'seventies, of the recent history of this farm or of that, of this man or the other, whom I could recall sufficiently to keep his racy tongue wagging in entertaining and informing fashion. We discussed the past, and present too, of the little river which played the same old music through his paddocks before the house, and held memories for me, not of trout only, but sadder ones, of friends of youth and middle age who had passed over to the majority in scenes far remote from this.

CHAPTER IV

TWEEDSIDE

THE "Merse" is something of an archaic term, and the Scottish pronunciation must be remembered together with the fact that it signifies the Marsh or March, the fashion or the loose spelling in times remote having disposed of the final *h*. The "Merse" may or may not be applied in print to the whole of Berwickshire; but in practice, so far as the term is in local use, it generally stands for the fat, undulating, well-farmed, richly wooded lowland that occupies about half the county, and lies between the Lammermoors and the Tweed. A sheep farmer in the Berwickshire Lammermoors, which are the larger part of that long sweeping range, would assuredly speak of the "Merse" as another district, and associated with the arts of husbandry. Lauderdale, again, runs from north to south across the western end of the county, but I do not think that its people ever think of themselves as living in the "Merse." Whether the bare stone wall, poorish country reclaimed from moor and moss, that lies between Lauderdale and the undoubted Merse and to the west of Greenlaw would strictly be included under that informal but ancient and familiar term I do not know, nor probably does anybody in it.

It does not matter in the least. Probably the same uncertainties would confront a native if requested to delimit the Weald of Kent, and such precision would be of little consequence. What is the Merse, however,

beyond dispute is that broad, delectable, and diversified stretch of country that spreads westward for twenty odd miles to near Kelso and Greenlaw, lying, as related, between the Lammermoors and the Tweed. But no strangers ever go touring in the Merse. At any rate in the course of considerable journeys over its highways and byways, during two or three recent summers, I have never seen any outward or visible sign of such a thing, nor ever encountered a person looking in the least like one impelled there from some far country by mere curiosity. This will perhaps be accounted a merit, and it is chiefly worth noting as the Merse proper runs out into what guide-books call "the Scott country." For Smailholm Tower, though not of it apparently in the tourist sense, is most assuredly in it, and also in Berwickshire, while Dryburgh, where you are fairly engulfed in the pilgrim vortex, is just within the county; but of this anon.

The Merse is assuredly the most luxuriant spot in Scotland. The Lothians are laid out by man and nature upon rather a different scheme, nor have the far northern counties of England anywhere a region so lavish at once of the soil's abundance and the greenwood shade. The lairds of Berwickshire were second to none in that ardour for tree-planting which so felicitously took hold of Scottish fancy in the early eighteenth century, and by degrees converted a country whose astounding nakedness was the burden of every traveller's tale, into a normal condition wherever trees would grow, and in the deep rich soils of the Merse they grew and waxed mightily. But for the comparative scarcity of the English elm, of which, to be candid, a little goes a long way, you might over miles of many roads be in the most umbrageous of the English Midlands. But there the analogy in almost every respect ceases. There is

more tillage and less meadow, and the former, as it is the more skilful and productive, so it strikes a more lustrous note in the chequered landscape. The grain fields, whether in the ripening ear or in the stook upon the clean stubbles, glow a deeper gold. The healthy, well-fed, flickering turnip breadths are more vivid in their green between the woods. Even that homely article the potato, when clustering over a thirty-acre field with a slanting sun upon it, contributes a characteristic note. But the opulent slopes, the umbrageous ridges, the stately seats and timbered parks, the tree-girt roads of the Merse in all their accessories, and above all in their horizons, and consequently in their atmosphere, differ vastly from the midland county into which a Southron of only moderate observation and no eye for the soils might fancy he had drifted. For above the stately woods or the long folds of the large clean fields, the pale peaks of the Cheviots will as often as not rise upon one side: or upon the other the long sweeps of the Lammermoors will cut the sky, both eloquent of primitive solitudes and of everything, indeed, that the opulent foreground is not.

And then, too, there are the streams of the Merse! every one of them bringing the spirit of the mountain and the wild into the rich low ground, and retaining the buoyancy of their clear amber waters till their complaining voices are ultimately silenced in the wide swish of Tweed. The Whiteadder alone, whose deep valley threads with tortuous course the fattest heart of the Merse, would give that county some distinction. For the Whiteadder is as fair a mountain-bred river, being indeed much more than a stream, from its source on the Lothian edge of the Lammermoors to its confluence with the Tweed near Berwick, that the heart could desire. With fine disregard for the well-ordered land-

scape, its pride of timber, and its pride of crop, the impetuous river churns in the deep twisting valley that its chafing waters have cut in the course of ages through the sandstone. Narrow breadths of green meadow serve to set off the glitter of its rapid currents and take no great injury from its floods. But the plough, the harrow, and the drill of the practical Merse farmer are thrust back out of sight behind the steep ridges that for the most part hem in either side of its delightful trough. And within these limits, after breaking from its moorland gorges, the Whiteadder urges its clear waters through twenty miles of ever-changing and often exquisite river scenery.

Chafing always upon a rocky bed, the river gathers round it all that fine tangle of foliage which you only see upon impetuous streams. The orderly atmosphere of the Merse might be a hundred miles away. Bosky steeps dip a curtain of wild and natural foliage till their boughs trail in the troubled waters; or again great forest trees of oak and ash, with roots exposed by the fretting of flood waters, rise on some level margin of turf that has been abandoned to gorse and broom and briar. Here and there, too, bare red sandstone cliffs or softer screes wage continual war at some sharp turn with the rushing amber streams. Stone bridges carry the highway across the river here and there, giving the passing traveller with his eyes open a brief glance both up and down stream into another sort of world, while byways dip into broad glistening fords with one of those narrow foot-bridges characteristic of the country swung high on wires above the stream. Many seats of ancient fame, too, are fringed and beautified by the Whiteadder. Modernised often or rebuilt, but still quite frequently in possession of families as old as the stones of the earliest house, while here and there a ruined pele tower above

the bank bears witness, if such were needed, that it ran of old through bloody ground. Its younger sister, the Blackadder, which joins forces with it in the heart of the Merse, though not half the size, has already run a long course through Berwickshire. Entering the lower country near Greenlaw, the smaller river purls eastward with much of the impetuosity, though only here and there with as full a measure of beauty, as its more distinguished fellow.

All roads in the Merse tend to Berwick except the still more numerous ones that lead with singular precision from one main artery to the other and give the county some appearance on the map of a chessboard crossed obliquely by two or three waving lines heading for the lower right-hand corner. The Merse, using the term as I am for the low country of Berwickshire, is in truth extraordinarily well served by roads, and practically all alike are admirable. Frankly, it is a region to be explored by its roads, just as its adjoining hills, the Cheviots or the Lammermoors, are for the walker alone. There is no point in long-distance walking in the Merse, just as there is nothing to be urged against it for the few who carry the cult of walking to the daily compassing of long sections of road, when on their holidays. But as the difficulty nowadays is to find any one in an ordinary company of young and old willing to face even a twenty-mile walk in the hills, we need not be concerned for quite unlikely trampers along the roads of the Merse. For these last, as for the region itself, there is nothing like the cycle for the individual of reasonably active habit. What else, indeed, is there ? Automobiles of all kinds are invaluable for getting rapidly to points far or near, but perfectly useless for a rational appreciation of a countryside, even if they were not ridiculous for such purpose in the case of the young and strong,

and irksome to such as may be no longer young, but are of active predilections.

Trains are scarce. Excluding the great main line along the coast, there are not fifty miles of railroad in the whole county, though a portion of the North-Eastern running south of the Tweed to Kelso is of some service for the Merse. But the cyclist, with the occasional help, if required, of both railroads, the one skirting the foot of the Lammermoors to Lauderdale, the other following Tweed, and so leaving the whole Merse between them, can see much that is famous and much that is beautiful and a great deal that is interesting with ease and contentment. I am assuming that Berwick is a temporary headquarters. For whether the pilgrim comes from the south of England or the west of Scotland to spend his nights and other spare hours within the breath of the North Sea at this point, it will assuredly prove a stimulant to health and vigour that will surprise him if he has never before sniffed it. Moreover, as has been, I trust, sufficiently manifested in a former chapter, Berwick is a noble place in its way, and always good to linger in.

But let us away on the more southerly road from Berwick, that one which eventually skirts the Coldstream and Birgham reaches of the Tweed. Lifted high up over the bleak prolific fields of the "Liberties of Berwick," with Halidon Hill to the north and beyond the noble river shining in the vale below, the line of distant Cheviots, we descend the long slope, to the last of the Whiteadder's many bridges. Here around its piles this lusty child of Lammermoor is playing its final gambols and with plaintive voice singing its swan-song between meadowy banks. For the meadows open here to the adjacent Tweed, and through them Tweed's lowest tributary winds to a tide-invaded confluence. A

living Scottish writer of repute has described the significance of these " Berwick Bounds," these few thousand acres of corn land windswept from the North Sea, in an

The Whiteadder at Edrington.

epigrammatic sentence or two that from this point of view at any rate catches the fancy. " Surely," writes Sir Herbert Maxwell, " they were but scant counterpoise for sunny Aquitaine and Guienne, opulent Bordeaux,

and the Pas de Calais, all lost to the Crown of England in the hundred years' war. Such was part of the price paid for the lesson that Scotsmen may never be coerced." This might serve to chasten the pride of the Berwick burgess, unless, peradventure, it further exalted it in the high valuation thus set upon his little kingdom. But we are not yet out of it, only lingering for a moment in this one leafy and sheltered corner of the Palatinate. For the boundary is a little beyond the Whiteadder, and that lively stream undergoes a change of nationality for the last three miles of her course. Like Tweed, only much more so, a Scottish river, she expires in English arms. There is an inn beside Canty Bridge, much patronised, no doubt, by Berwick anglers, who are a numerous company ; and it may be said at once that there is not a more naturally prolific trout stream in Great Britain than the Whiteadder.

The old road into Scotland crossed the Bounds a mile or so higher up, and in a picturesque bend of the river, where it chafes the feet of woody cliffs, are the traces of Edrington Castle, where many a bloody fight was fought, but now the haunt of trout-fishers and sylvan peace. Here were quartered repeatedly companies of Scots with unfriendly designs on Berwick, and here in times of danger the English Wardens posted troops to stop the Scottish advance and guard the Liberties.

Close by, too, the Whiteadder runs through " Tibby Fowler's " Glen, that lady being a heroine of sorts in Border poetry, and celebrated by Allan Ramsay in a familiar ballad ; Tibby was only interesting for a remarkable combination of material wealth with a poverty of physical attraction so deplorable as to make the inevitable wooing of the heiress by the local swains meet subject for the satirist.

"Tibby Fowler of the Glen,
There's ower mony wooin' at her;
Tibby Fowler o' the Glen
There's ower mony wooin' at her,
Wooin' at her, pu'in' at her,
Courtin' her and canna get her.
Filthy elf, it's for her pelf
That a' the lads are wooin' at her.

Ten came east and ten came west,
Ten came rowin' o'er the water,
Twa came down the lang dykeside—
There's twa-and-thirty wooin' at her."

But the stronghold was apparently as impregnable as the stone one on the hill above had been in former days. And close beside these scenes of strife in love and war stands Hutton Hall, the ancient keep of the Homes, now enlarged and modernised, though retaining as a country seat much of its ancient character. It was here that Edward I. encamped when in 1296 he captured the defiant town of Berwick and converted it into a shambles. This, however, is drifting a bit up the valley of the Whiteadder. But Paxton, another former seat of the Homes, and now a large nineteenth-century house, stands beside our route, and its profusely timbered park, sloping to the last shallows of the Tweed, lends great beauty to this final reach of the river before it touches the tidal mudbanks. Indeed it is worth while turning down the road just beyond Paxton, that bound for Northumberland brings you in a few hundred yards to the great Chain or Union Bridge over Tweed. Not because it is, I believe, the first suspension bridge built in the island, and that, too, by a naval officer nearly a century ago, but for the fine prospect both up and down the river with which it will reward your slight effort. Upstream the woods of Horncliff display a rich curtain of drapery above the English bank, while a wood-

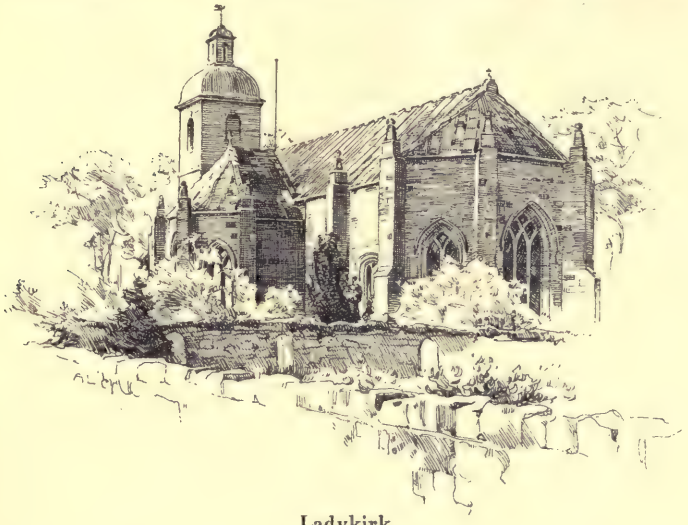
fringed belt of meadow land with grazing cattle makes a harmonious complement upon the opposite shore. Looking downwards, the woods shift to the Scottish side and become the park lands of Paxton House. But the luxuriance of the timber is such that only a patch of sward here and there catches the eye and gives a finishing touch to a quite charming scene, all sparkling as it is below with the last rapids of the Tweed.

Some angler will probably be casting his flies upon ripple and eddies he doubtless knows by heart, and is sometimes just where he ought to be, in the picture. In not many great rivers in this country could you stand but knee-deep in gravelly shallows among summer woods and catch trout or grayling within three miles of its conflict with the surf of the open sea. The influence of the tide, as a matter of fact, is felt far above the Union Bridge, even to Norham, and the little cobble of the net fisherman, whose rights follow the tide, may be seen moored to the shore at any point.

But to pursue our road up the river, though nowhere yet, unfortunately, in actual touch with it, the traveller must find his interest in the rural economies of the Merse. He must forego for a space even historical associations—unless he has sat closely at the feet of the local antiquary, which he is not in the least likely to have done—or those glimpses of an inspiring distance common to most of this Borderland. He must resign himself, in short, to his foregrounds, and one must admit there is little in all this country of those ancient habitations for the housing of men or animals that help to redeem the dullest landscape in the southern half of the island. The wayfarer who comes north must put any expectations of such things entirely from his mind, and find his compensation in the grim relics of an even older day, the castle or the pele tower. There are no

Tudor farms or manor houses, whether of timber, brick, or stone, here, no mellow homesteads or manors, hardly less engaging, of the days of Anne or the early Georges; no thatched villages half buried in flowers or orchards; no public-houses of such alluring sort as to tempt even a temperance orator with an eye for the picturesque, if the combination is admissible. There are no crazy barns with moss-covered roofs, and, unfortunately, even but few churches or portions of them that survived the ravages of the English raider and the anti-æsthetic vigilance of the reformed Scottish Church. There is nobody alive, I suppose, who is more severe upon his ancestors than the modern Scotsman with an artistic soul, while, so far as my own acquaintance goes, the clergy of the Establishment seem to have scant sympathy with the architectural predilections of their more immediate predecessors. Yet once upon a time Berwickshire was quite rich in Norman and Early English churches. But much of this will be superfluous to the intelligent reader who has anything more than a mere nodding acquaintance with his own country. It is enough to say that a few old country houses on a large scale, the shattered remnants of castles and pele towers, and here and there the portion of a church that has miraculously escaped the ravage of the Southron and the fanatical zeal of the old Calvinist, represent almost all of those features which in the south so greatly enhance the charm of landscape. But you must come to the Border in altogether another frame of mind, and if you are reasonably qualified, great compensation will be found for the decorative accessories of the southern landscape. As a pele tower would look absurd at the foot of the South Downs, so would a half-timbered thatched cottage on the slopes of the Lammermoors seem quite painfully incongruous. There are ruined castles

in the south in abundance, beautiful to look at and interesting structurally, as well as for the men and women they have harboured, and occasionally for strenuous doings. But compared with the Border castle their story is thin and tame. With fierce mien they scowled over a peaceful, unwarlike peasantry that had no power to resist them, and had probably lost the wish. The only part of South Britain where you get all these



Ladykirk.

things in a measure combined with a past in full harmony with them is the Welsh Border. That the Border strife of Wales, as that of two divergent races or their respective allies of the moment, differed widely in essentials from that of the north, which was the conflict of politically divided brethren of more equal strength, matters nothing here. Nor does it that the Welsh Border, *qua* Border, was at peace and civilised while the Northerners on both sides were still astir

erecting castles, peles, and bastle houses; lifting one another's cattle and cutting one another's throats. Indeed, speaking on broad lines, the same hand that brought peace with a sword to the one actually stirred up the other to a bitterer strife. For no apology is needed for again reminding the reader, either English or Scotch, that till the first Edward appeared upon the scene there was very little of that ferocious antipathy between the nations which became henceforward a fierce and fixed tradition. The occasional wars of the kings and their following, the mere exuberance of a semi-barbarous period, meant nothing. Even Edward, a great statesman, whatever else he may have been, at first, no doubt, meant well, when he travelled, on this very road perhaps, between Berwick and Norham or Birgham, as the invited arbiter between the chiefs of a distracted country that had not yet become a nation as we hold the word. His views towards a union were peaceful and surely statesman-like ones. However, things went agog, as we know. He was a soldier and a man of wrath, and in the end died at the wrong moment from one point of view, creating thereby a nation, and provoking three centuries of almost ceaseless strife.

And in the meantime we have turned off the main road to Kelso, which runs with precision from one end of the county to the other, while the line of Tweed forges away to the southward, and after passing the little village of Horndean and crossing its burn, which in the shallow vale beneath it hurries to the Tweed, the shattered towers of Norham, high perched up on the English bank, can be seen in fitful glimpses through the trees. But Norham belongs to Northumberland—very much so—though, to be precise, the feudal appanage of the Prince Bishops of Durham, and in its fighting days and indeed till quite recent ones, an isolated fragment

of that county. On this side, however, and right on the road we have a building of another sort worth coming a long way to see, and of a quite exceptionally interesting origin. On the battle-field of Shrewsbury we have a memorial church erected at the time by a subject as a thanksgiving for victory and for the saying of perpetual masses for the souls of the slain. Here at Ladykirk we have a thank-offering of the same kind erected by a monarch, not for victory, but for preservation from a watery grave in the Tweed below. This deliverance was in the year 1500, and how Ladykirk, standing right in the gateway of southern Scotland, escaped those frightful and successive ravages of Dacre, Surrey, Evers, or Hertford in the sixteenth century, which left the Abbeys of Kelso, Dryburgh, and Melrose the pathetic wrecks we see them now, is a marvel.

Not that Ladykirk aspires to such comparison. It is merely a curious old parish church some hundred feet long and fashioned of red sandstone, and that, too, in a style calculated to give pause to the passing stranger with any sort of eye for such matters. Its date may account for some measure of eccentricity in detail, or James IV. himself may have had a hand in the design! But the real interest which attaches to it over and above that which prompted its erection lies in the mere fact of there being a pre-Reformation Scottish church actually looking across the Tweed and still intact, save for some recent pewing, put in, however, for comfort, not of necessity. There may be a reason for all this, since tradition runs that the King vowed that this votive offering of his to Our Lady should be a building that neither fire nor water could destroy. Certain it is that no particle of wood was used in its erection, for it has a barrel vaulted stone roof, on which are laid stone flags, and the very seatings were of stone till within

living memory. The shape is cruciform, the ends of the short transepts and the chancel being five-sided apsidal. The building is lavish in strange massive crocketted pinnacles, and in view, I presume, of the weight of the roof, is heavily buttressed. Around it spreads a green and shady kirkyard crowded with the tombstones of departed Borderers, many of which bear ancient dates. It is altogether a peaceful and alluring spot, and the adjacent hamlet, with its one-storied red-roofed cottages, makes for harmony; for I must say something of an extenuating nature before I have done concerning Berwickshire cottages. The noble timber all about it, the cawing of rooks, the faintly heard complainings of the historic river, the near neighbourhood of a great castle renowned above all other Border castles in history and romance; all these combine to make Ladykirk a winsome spot for a half-hour's dalliance on a summer afternoon.

On my first visit, the church, as is usual in Scotland, being locked, I was on the point of departing without a sight of the interior, taking for granted its adaptation to the rather arid exigencies of Presbyterian worship. But two village matrons of ripe years and comfortable proportions were opportunely discussing the affairs of the parish at the gate, and proved to be of the eloquent and accessible sample of Border peasant as opposed to the other and perhaps more prevalent uncommunicative type. What was still nicer, they were proud of their church, and made me feel quite ashamed of being caught, as it were, in the very act of leaving it but half explored, though, as a matter of fact, it was only a brief postponement in this case. "It wad be an awfu' pity for ye to gang awa', sir, wi'out seein' the inside of the kirk—sae mony hundred years old as it is, tae."

Whether she suspected me of a lingering irresolution,

which would have been most unjust, I know not, but the speaker, or rather one of them, for both were eloquent, stout as she was, hurried off herself to a neighbouring cottage and returned with the sexton's, or rather beadle's, blooming daughter, who held the keys of office, and we all went in together. I have inspected hundreds of churches under many auspices, and not seldom that of unofficial villagers of the other sex with the prospect of a glass of beer and notions that are worth many pints of it, but this was refreshingly novel. I let my cicerones tell the oft-told tale of the King's escape from the rage of Tweed and his subsequent act of pious devotion, with some accessories I had never heard before, in their own way and in their own unalloyed vernacular. The interior is absolutely plain, but of interest, with its stone roof vaulting, its bare walls, and lancet windows, as the original building in every essential as completed by the King's architect.

The thought struck me that the amount of gunpowder required for the destruction of so massive a building was possibly a consideration in view of its material emptiness and ecclesiastical unimportance in the eyes of King Henry's devastators, for which we may be thankful. For it is a most unique personal memorial of the man who of all the Stuart line one feels perhaps is the most worthy of remembrance—not, perhaps, for any perfections of character, but as a king. He had a long reign, during which Scotland was unprecedentedly progressive. He was very much of a man, if not distinguished for special wisdom or for restraint He seems certainly to have possessed no little magnetism, and is generally held to be the first Scottish King who could lead something like a united nation, Gaelic and Teutonic, to battle. It is unfortunate that he used this influence in ill-judged fashion, though in full accord with

that evil star which accentuated the impracticable side of his royal race. But at any rate he had the saving fortune to die in what at the last was a chivalrous blunder, and at the head of his troops in the fiercest battle of the long list fought between England and Scotland. Other Stuarts were brave enough in action, but they had neither the good fortune to get killed nor assuredly the exuberant virility, the Homeric dash, that made James's conduct and death at Flodden go far to extenuate his responsibility for the humiliation and ruin he brought on a country he certainly loved and had ruled well after a fashion for thirty years. When at a critical moment in a great battle a king gets off his horse, pulls off his boots, seizes a spear, and rushes down on foot upon the foe at the head of, and indeed too much ahead of his division, and falls fighting amid his nobles, it is at least a magnificent atonement for one great error of judgment. But a glamour attaches to James IV. above all other Scottish kings since Bruce. And here, in sight of Norham, which he besieged and captured at the opening of that brief and fatal campaign, and in sight of Flodden Hill, when he and it ended, it is singularly appropriate that his handiwork should survive as his memorial; still more that it should survive in so acceptable and rare a monument in these parts as a perfect pre-Reformation church. The first freshness will hardly have worn off its red stones when James passed down this way with most of that enormous army of a hundred thousand men that had rallied to his standard at Edinburgh, and, no doubt, mass was frequently celebrated here for the Scottish troops during the Flodden campaign. I did not discuss the complexities of King James's character with the two old ladies, but was quite content to listen to their rendering of the chief tale, as it had the flavour

at least of oral tradition. One of them, moreover, remembered sitting as a child upon the stone seats. "Aye, and I mind weel how cauld they were."

A little beyond this a road runs down to the stone bridge which crosses Tweed just above Norham. Of this famous place, so big with memories, I shall say nothing here, as it is on English soil, and for the further

The Tweed from Union Bridge.

reason that in my recent volume on Northumberland I gave some pages to it. That famous meeting of 1291, however, when King Edward decided between the claims of the eight competitors to the throne of Scotland, was actually held this side the river, in this same parish of Ladykirk, formerly Upsettlington, and on the meadow lying opposite Norham. But no one, of course, visiting these parts fails to visit Norham, and from Berwick it is but two stations distant on the North-

Eastern, with a short mile walk across the fields to the castle. This with its spacious, picturesque old village and noble Norman church makes matter for the spending of a leisurely and delightful day which the enterprising may extend to Ladykirk. For the latter is but a fitting complement to the Norham group of associations. It belongs essentially to the same atmosphere, and should share in the day-dreams to which no doubt the properly constituted pilgrim will be inspired. But whether equipped or not for all that Norham means, there will surely be some that will remember how a new heaven and a new earth opened to their youthful fancy upon its sunset-gilded towers, as its trumpets sounded the approach of Marmion and his first introduction to the reader.

After leaving the church, the road skirts for some distance the broad, well-timbered policies of Ladykirk House, where nearly a century ago dwelt William Robertson, one of the fathers of that advanced agriculture, the lessons of which lie all over the face of the Merse to-day. If the old farming families of the seventies are not often *in situ*, to borrow an antiquarian phrase, and have been wiped out by misfortune, actual or prospective, in the parlous times of the eighties and after and by the permanent slump in grain, their successors under altered circumstances maintain their traditions. In the days of my youth wheat held a great place in the Merse. To-day barley has almost ousted it, and one might, I think, fairly say that it fills nearly twice the amount of the space more generally allotted to it in a tillage country with an equal capacity for growing the three standard grain crops. I have never in my life seen so much barley, and so much of it on such a high level anywhere in Great Britain as in Berwickshire. How it may now fare with brewers

and distillers struggling against heavy odds remains to be seen. An encouraging note for the brewer, however, comes from the local publican, who reports an increasing taste for what was once as much the national beverage of Scotland as of England. Not many readers will probably remember that it was England forced Scotland to drink whisky by ruining the Scottish breweries, not intentionally, but automatically, when the northern country at the Union fell under the excise laws of the predominant partner, which destroyed their native brewing industry and promoted a taste for ardent spirits. No one can possibly desire that working men should drink whisky, above all the vile stuff that Scotland, once conspicuous for a good article even in its humbler hostelries, now vies with England in retailing. But good ale is a fine and wholesome beverage for men employed in manual labour. No temperance zealots will persuade a man of sense that lashings of stewed tea of an inferior quality is a better prescription for breeding sound men and Christians than sound ale. Nor, again, is the public-house anything like the frequent object of the wayside here that it is in rural England. You may travel for miles without encountering one. The wayfarer who perchance, like the present writer, prefers the homely fare and shelter of an inn and a crack with mine host, to a packet of sandwiches under a fence, will find many a blank before him. Nor has opportunity created the habit of frequenting the public-house in the evening and discussing the affairs of the nation, of the squire, and of their employers to anything like the extent prevailing in the south. Furthermore, there are not nearly so many villages in a rural district of the same population: most of the labourers' cottages being attached to the homestead, a condition which applies also to Northumberland.

In no long time our road, which is now only a superior byway, emerges from the beautifully wooded policies of Milne Graden on to the banks of Tweed. It is a delectable and even sequestered point in the river's course; yet one of some consequence too, for just here the "sullen Till," after its long, tortuous windings through broad haughs from Wooler to the foot of Flodden edge, comes breaking with unwonted activity through Twizel woods into the Tweed. It is a scene worthy of the confluence of all the waters of the English Cheviots with those of the greater river still at this point the boundary of the nations. The familiar apostrophe of Tweed to Till, which banters the Northumbrian stream on its comparative sloth, and the grim rejoinder one might expect of a river steeped in Border conflict speaking to another of like memories, that it has "drowned twa men to Tweed's ane," needs no repeating. But the jest must be taken as retrospective, for here the Till, bearing with it the peaty waters of the Colledge, the Langdon, the Wooler, and half-a-dozen other lusty burns from the deep heart of Cheviot, comes pouring in with laudable impetuosity. Tweed herself, too, is here in one of her lively moods, rioting merrily round grassy islets to the junction whence the mingled waters go racing down against the red sandstone cliffs of Milne Graden, to vanish in the bosky woods beyond. The single stone arch over the Till, which the right wing of Surrey's army crossed to Flodden, is here hidden from view, though but a short mile up the woody gorge. So following up the course of Tweed along a little-travelled road, the ruinous church and large graveyard of Lennel, perched high between the road and river, mark the near approach of the town of Coldstream.

Lennel is the old kirk town of Coldstream, which last, leaving the other derelict, sprang into life some two

centuries ago, half a mile away. There is nothing now at Lennel but the forsaken church and its rambling, picturesque graveyard packed with the headstones and monuments of Logans, Thomsons, Lumsdens, Halls, Robertsons, Scotts, and all the generic names of the Eastern March. The small villages, which in former days must have been thick in this country, have largely disappeared. The minister of Coldstream, writing in

Where Till meets Tweed.

1832, makes note that four had been completely wiped out in this very parish. According to that invaluable work, *The Statistical Account of Scotland*, published some eighty years ago, and replete with much better reading than its name suggests, agricultural holdings had doubled in size, and though the labouring classes had decreased in number, they had enormously improved in circumstances and education within the previous forty years. Emigration to Canada is mentioned from many sources in these south-eastern counties as a strong

contributing cause to this decline in population, which was further assisted by the merging of small holdings in big ones and the growth of scientific farming.

But let there be no misdirected, ill-instructed lamentations over this steady stream from southern Scotland, which so materially helped to build up the great province of Ontario as we see it to-day. These were no Highland "clearances," nor anything at all resembling the mad expulsion of Scotch-Ulster yeomen by idiotic landlords and fatuous Anglican bishops to America in the eighteenth century. On the contrary, it was the golden age of the hard-fisted, industrious emigrant to Canada. This period extended roughly from 1820 to 1850, and no class in Britain profited more by it than the labourer from the Scottish Lowlands. The splendid wheat lands of Ontario were then being cleared, and still to be had on conditions which a thrifty Scotsman, even when virtually penniless on landing, sooner or later found means, for labour was highly paid, to take advantage of. I may claim to speak with some knowledge from the Canadian point of view of this movement. Thousands of Canadians, not merely yeomen farmers, but as many who have risen to the more lucrative and conspicuous spheres of life, are the sons and grandsons and great-grandsons of Scottish hinds. This is, of course, a matter of ordinary common knowledge to any one in touch with such things. Nor were the fortunate Scotsmen who profited by the opening of Canada as a field for the British immigrant, after the Napoleonic and Anglo-American wars, by any means all hinds and the like.

But these were the people who by comparison rose most in the world and so profited most. Their friends who remained behind were then and have always been, within the limitations of farm service, as well-to-do

probably as any in the country. The reports from almost every parish in south-eastern Scotland in the thirties describe the social, religious, and industrial condition of its people as excellent. But even thus, if there is any of that mawkish compassion which the sentimentalist of the Little-England type likes to lavish indiscriminately on the humbler exile, to be expended here, it would be on account of those who remained, not because they were miserable, but that they missed their chance of rising in the world. It may be said that they have had another since the north-west of Canada was opened, and with no forests to clear as a preliminary. That is true, though there are other things in favour of the early movement—which the reader may be surprised to hear landed forty or fifty thousand people annually in sailing-ships at Quebec—of no interest here. Moreover, the rural population, from its greater numbers and other causes, was more ripe for emigration in those days. Incidentally, the British emigrants that took so large a share in the making of Canada after the Napoleonic wars were a more capable and more successful lot than those who have played proportionately a much smaller part in the recent making of the North-West; partly for the sufficient reason that the old-timers came mainly from the land, while among the moderns the townsmen naturally enough, in a country rapidly degenerating into an industrial hive, predominate. It is pleasant to remember that on an early and protracted visit to Canada I came across several of the original emigrants from this part of the world, by that time old men with grown-up families around or near them, all living comfortably on well-ordered, productive farms of their own, amid a practically completed civilisation.

The forest of suggestive tombstones in Lennel

churchyard must be my apology for this digression, which probably would not have occurred but for an exhaustive survey of them in the performance of a friendly office—to wit, the reporting on the condition of certain tombs of which I had forgotten the situation. Here indeed is an instance of another kind of change, the wiping out in a local sense of a typical Border family of small lairds, large tenant farmers, soldiers, ministers, and such like, gradually loosening from the soil with each generation, till now, though represented in most other countries, there is actually, I believe, not one on the Border ; two fresh graves in a kirkyard not far away representing the last survivors here. Coldstream, a long mile beyond, is what old Leland would have called "a pratey toune." We are too far north for the architecturally picturesque, and its buildings have no claim to antiquity, but it wears a cheerful mien, which cannot, in truth, be said of all Scottish towns. And it stands well up on a ridge, beneath which Tweed comes curving round from Wark in a fine sweep, and racing briskly under the five arches of the stone bridge now well advanced in its second century, which unites the kingdoms. Coldstream Bridge, though less known to later fame, seems to have played much the same matrimonial rôle in the past as Lamberton Toll Bar and Gretna Green. One can fancy how desirable a second string to the enamoured fugitives' bow it must have been in the event of a close pursuit. A turn off the road, for instance, between Alnwick and Berwick, with a cut across to Coldstream, might effectually baffle the parental greyhounds, and cause them to overrun the scent for some distance if no informing wayfarers were handy. At any rate, that communicative minister at Coldstream to whom I am already indebted declares that these runaway English marriages performed by

any chance scoundrel were becoming a cause of stumbling among his own and other flocks. For many of his people now discarded the Church's assistance at their unions, and under the literal construction of the then Scottish law resorted to Coldstream Bridge and the services of the loafer for the price of a gill of whisky. Another blemish on the otherwise Arcadian content and simplicity of the Lowland folk in those days was caused by the difference between the Scottish and English spirit duties and the irresistible temptation to smuggling such an anomaly held out upon the Border. Perhaps the conscience of England was still pricking with the memory of the ruined Scotch breweries and its lamentable consequence. But, on the other hand, would Burns have sparkled on small ale ? And how would the Ettrick Shepherd, who, by his own account, took his whisky in a jug, have liked it ?

The house upon the street or its successor is proudly pointed out by the native of Coldstream where General Monk's recruiting sergeants raised the Border regiment which, after a few years' service in Scotland, went south at the Restoration and became the Coldstream Guards. Beyond the town at the foot of the slope the little river Leet crosses the road and runs down into the Tweed, which by a sudden loop encloses the woods and park-lands of Lees House, the seat of the Marjoribanks, to one of whom a lofty memorial statue rises above the town. The Leet is a notable exception among the Merse tributaries of the Tweed, being of sluggish habit and undistinguished low-country birth, and would be spoken of in even more slighting terms than it is by local chroniclers if it were not that larger trout haunt its narrow waters than those of any other feeder of the Tweed.

From the road a mile or so beyond Coldstream the

long, flat reach of the Tweed, carrying a swift but even current between the meadows, breaks into view. So on the southern shore does the knoll which carries the trifling remains of the once mighty castle of Wark, equal, indeed, to Norham in importance, with the rather forlorn-looking village scattered around its flanks. Wark, like Norham, would fill a chapter with stormy deeds that have been done there and the men of might that have held or attacked it. As at Norham, there were fords about Wark and Coldstream which have felt the tramp of many an English and Scottish army and have swallowed up many a bloodstained and failing fugitive from the surrounding battlefields. Here we look across a bare broken foreground of moorish hill and dale rising gradually to the great mass of the Cheviots, eight or ten miles away, where at their highest point, some 2700 feet, the international border line cleaves the waste. For about this point the Tweed makes her bow to the Cheviots, and at the same time, taking a more westerly turn, soon after ceases to be the Border line, and becomes henceforth a purely Scottish stream. Indeed I have failed to emphasise how greatly the Cheviots at points innumerable contribute to this road journey up Tweed along the southern fringe of Berwickshire. But everywhere in this country, whether in the Lammermoors, in the Merse, or in the wide sweeps of north Northumberland, they are always with us, a noble and majestic background shedding lustre, even when far away, on many a homely foreground scene. And when pressing to closer quarters, as at this bend of Tweed, where they become more dominant in the atmosphere and display the colouring and the contour of their shapely slopes, the grey screes and fern-clad folds of their bold rampart of cone-shaped foot-hills, the wayfaring stranger will assuredly feel

their call to greater intimacy. This, happily, is no difficult matter, whether from Berwick, Coldstream, or Kelso, for a morning train to Wooler will deposit him within a seven-mile walk of the summit of the big Cheviot, the monarch of the range, a walk as easy of performance as it is beautiful for its scenery and its solitude. But in the Coldstream neighbourhood the eye turns instinctively and repeatedly to the fir-crowned ridge of Flodden, but four miles away, and its adjoining shoulder of Branxton, on whose long slope the battle was actually fought. What a sight the fords of Wark and Coldstream must have witnessed upon the night and following morn of that fatal day! But happily there were no cutting and slashing horsemen at their heels, as there seem to have been in the great stampede from Homildon Hill, whose clear-cut, bare steep rises beyond Flodden, for after the greater battle there was no pursuit. Night fell upon victors as exhausted as the vanquished—

> "The skilful Surrey's sage commands
> Led back from strife his shattered bands,
> And from the charge they drew
> As mountain waves from wasted lands
> Sweep back to ocean blue."

And even more to the point is Sir Walter's brief but striking picture of the action of the Scots—

> "They melted from the field as snow,
> When streams are swollen and south winds blow,
> Dissolves in silent dew.
> Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless splash,
> While many a broken band,
> Disordered, through her currents dash,
> To gain the Scottish land.
> To town and tower, to down and dale,
> To tell red Flodden's fatal tale.

Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife and carnage drear
Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shivered was fair Scotland's spear
And broken was her shield."

There was a nunnery in those days at Coldstream, now disappeared to the last stone, but tradition has it that the Abbess exerted herself to gather for burial there such few bodies of the Scottish nobility as could be rescued from the thousands of naked corpses that whitened the slopes of Branxton Ridge when the despoilers had done their nightly work. As that of the King himself could not be identified, since there were no Scottish prisoners, till Dacre, who had known him, came on the scene, the beneficent efforts of the Abbess must have encountered no little difficulty. The men of the Merse, under their feudal chieftain, the Earl of Home, with the other Borderers from Selkirk and Ettrick Forest in that division, played at once the greatest and the least part in all that Scottish host. For it will be remembered how upon that left wing they overthrew at first the English right and gained the only success of the day, and, though checked by Dacre and his English Borderers, were never beaten. After this, though the fight was still young, the less said about them the better, and indeed there is nothing to say. Specialists, of which there are naturally many on such an epoch-making and dramatic campaign, still vainly speculate on the motives which kept 10,000 hardy Borderers idle at so tremendous a moment. General opinion, however, seems inclined to the only apparent explanation, which may be expressed in the single word "booty." The Borderer, like the Highlander, was more of a particularist even thus late than a Nationalist, and like the other, "portable property"

was with him the natural sequence of success. When the main battle in the centre was probably assuming its most critical and tempestuous aspect, when the English left had driven the raw Highland right off the field and joined in the great central struggle, the men of the Merse and the Border were undoubtedly leaving things undone they ought to have done, which was to assist their King. Whether they were actively engaged in doing what they ought not to have done, and rifling the undefended baggage and the dead bodies of friend and foe, nobody will ever know. A fit of the spleen on the Earl of Home's part, the only alternative solution to the problem, was bruited about at the time, but seems to find little favour now. But what is most disconcerting under the searchlight of the ruthless inquirer, the "Flowers of the Forest," the Borderers of Jedburgh and Selkirk, who were under Home, could assuredly not have been "wede away," being in fact the only division of the Scottish army who left the field tolerably intact.

For four hundred years the field of Flodden, or, to be precise, the broad breast of Branxton Hill, which rises gently from the little church and village of that name, has borne no trace nor memorial of the immortal fight; nor even in this later century of travel and aroused interest in such things has it achieved the faintest self-consciousness of being anything more than a secluded north-easterly slope of arable land given over to the four-course system. A few stray people now and again, or an occasional local historical society, have doubtless kept the memory of this field green among half-wondering villagers who ploughed and reaped it. Yet there is not a battlefield in Great Britain more compact, more suggestive, and more illuminating, and there has never been a more dramatic fight. From the belt of timber

that now crosses the ridge and marks the centre of the Scottish array and the King's position, you can follow down the line of Surrey's advanced division, which, carrying out his daring tactics, marched down the Till valley to Twizell Bridge, and, doubling back on the nearer bank, joined the main body in locked array at the foot of Branxton slope. From this same ridge the Tweed shimmers in the middle distance, and the Merse beyond spreads to the Lammermoors, and the Lammermoors fade away to the horizon, behind which lies Edinburgh. The slope on the right is close at hand up which Stanley and his Lancashire and Cheshire archers drove the unaccustomed Highlanders of Lennox and Huntly out of the fight. The half-seen, steeper declivity on the left, down which and over the flat below the mysterious Home and his Borderers drove their victorious charge, is within a few hundred yards. Lastly, and in mid-view, trends gently downwards that fatal slope where by far the greatest shock of battle, with its long, desperate finish, churned to mud the rain-soaked, sticky soil. A small enough arena the whole of it for a mêlée of seventy or eighty thousand men ! But the mute, unconscious look of the field has at last been justifiably broken. Though Flodden, unlike Hastings or Bannockburn or Naseby, or even Tewkesbury or Bosworth, was fought for no object worth mentioning, and was in truth little more than a gigantic Border raid of a whole nation met and defeated, it has run down the ages with a grim fascination entirely its own, and the men on both sides of the Border have felt that it was full time some token should be set up on a spot of such world-renown and imperishable fame. So an obelisk now rises upon the knoll where King James is thought to have fallen in the very thick of the hurly-burly. It was unveiled in the September of 1910,

before a large company of Englishmen and Scotchmen; and since it commemorates an event obviously too famous, and even too pathetic, for conventional inscriptive lettering, it bears on its face the simple words:

To the Brave of Both Nations

CHAPTER V

FROM COLDSTREAM TO HUME CASTLE

At Coldstream, whose railway station is at Cornhill, over the bridge on English soil, the quiet byway on which we have more or less followed the banks of Tweed from Ladykirk becomes one of the highways from England into Scotland. This added importance, however, so far as may be gathered from two or three leisurely journeys along it on summer days, is not very insistently borne in upon the traveller, even in this restless age of the motor. Salmon pools famous in angling literature swish beneath the alders by the quietest of roadsides. Spots famous in history, like the Field of Flodden, might seem almost to cultivate oblivion. There would assuredly be "nothing to see" for that fatuous portion of the touring world who would express disappointment, and doubtless do so unabashed, at the Field of Waterloo, at Birgham, where Edward the First made that treaty of marriage between the first Prince of Wales and the infant heiress to the Scottish throne, which, had fate allowed, might possibly have altered British history.

Just across the river from Birgham stands Carham with its church, standing high above the bank and its little stream which takes up for a short distance the rôle of boundary now abandoned by the Tweed. Here, almost within hail of the scene of Edward's attempt in 1290 to unite for ever the two unnaturally severed kingdoms, was fought, nearly three centuries before, the

battle of Carham, in which Malcolm II., King of Scotland, or such parts of it as conferred the title, defeated Earl Edulph of Northumbria. This battle occasioned or confirmed the cession of Lothian, then the northern portion of the Earldom between Forth and Tweed. Malcolm's victory over the Bernician province of Northumberland, otherwise that represented by the modern county, was complete and bloody. The news of it is said to have killed the pious Bishop Earldhun, who had almost completed the Cathedral at Durham which preceded the present noble pile. All this fell about at the beginning of King Canute's reign, when his Danish Earls were set up over the outlying provinces, and Edulph, according to Freeman, was a poor and timorous specimen of them.

Carham was not as Flodden. Neither Scot nor Southron could feel a thrill for a battle, howsoever fierce, whose details we know nothing about, and which was fought in the interest of chieftains before patriotism had dawned in this part of Britain. However, our interest in Carham does not lie in any misty picture of the fight, but from its far-reaching results. For on the cession of Lothian and its conditions hung that whole future dispute of homage by the Scottish to the English king. So at least the Scottish historians hold, though Freeman is not quite in accord with them. However that may be, it is remarkable that two secluded spots facing one another across the Tweed, like Carham and Birgham, should be so vitally concerned with two momentous occasions, and those far asunder, in the long wrangle over Anglo-Scottish relations. This fortuitous contiguity may furnish apt food for the reflective soul who finds himself between them. Let us hope that the salmon fisher, who is often such, and to good purpose, finds compensation for his

sometime ineffectual labours in an atmosphere so heavily charged upon both banks with the shades of epoch-making heroes. Sir Herbert Maxwell, than whom no better authority on heroes, salmon, or the Tweed could be desired, regards the cast below Carham church as one of the surest on the whole river. So here is a happy combination for the fortunate wights whose lines are cast, to put the matter in both figurative and literal guise, in a spot so favourable to fish and fancy.

But here we are in the last parish of Berwickshire, that of Eccles, to whose church and village a turn inland from Birgham quickly leads. And as I have designed all the space between the covers of this book for the two counties whose attractions no outsiders but a few golfers in their limited sense know anything about, I do not propose to trespass seriously upon the soil of Roxburgh, celebrated as it has been by so many pens, famous and otherwise. Being geographically of the Lowlands and not of the Highlands, that beautiful county watered by Tweed and Teviot would possibly be little more familiar to the Southron than its eastern neighbours, but for the possession of Abbotsford, Melrose, and most of what the tourist understands by the "Scott country." As a matter of fact, the wizard's bones rest just the breadth of Tweed outside his adopted county. This, after all, is but a portion of all the shire of Roxburgh means. For the rest, it includes the whole long stretch of the Scottish Cheviots. It comprises nearly all the raiding dales of famous name, and confronts practically the whole of the "Riding" country of equal fame upon the English side. The Scott country of postcards and railway posters, with its absurd limitations, would be a standing irritant if you were foolish enough to quarrel with the inevitable and the material.

But at any rate, the home of Scott for so much of his life has rightly the first claim on the stranger, who seldom has, or at any rate makes, much time for any other enterprise. So Abbotsford, Melrose, and Dryburgh comprise a sort of physically glorified Stratford-on-Avon. In the one case the reality and nearness of association, personal and literary, is intense; with the other the greater glory of the man has to serve for most of these things according to faith. But I am quite sure the inspiring surface of Roxburghshire gets nothing like the attention that the prosaic pastures of Warwickshire receive from the pilgrim. This partly arises from the fact that the latter comes mainly from overseas; and the fat green opulence of middle England, with its picturesque village garniture, appeals most strongly, as is natural, to persons from new and ill-groomed countries, whether of flat or alpine surface. Nor again would very many of them come properly equipped for a due understanding or appreciation of what lies beneath the surface of a Border county.

But one other great business was transacted, or rather attempted, at Birgham, besides those of Malcolm and Edward. For in 1188, when the call of the Holy Land was urgent upon Western Europe, and Henry II. in council assembled had levied a tax of one-tenth on all English property for the support of a Crusade, he sent the Bishop of Durham to see what could be done in Scotland. So William the Lion, with a great assembly of nobles and bishops, met the Durham deputation at Birgham; for this was before the days of Anglo-Scottish asperities. But the meeting fell flat. Even William the Lion failed to persuade his subjects to unbutton their pockets—a great disappointment to that enterprising warrior. But if peradventure any reader of this book follows up the Tweed as far as Birgham, he

will, and assuredly should, pursue the next four miles of riverside road to Kelso. In so doing he will pass through the parish of Ednam, where the poet James Thomson, a son of its manse, was born. Most of his life, as in those days of the early eighteenth century was almost inevitable to an aspirant for high honours, or at least their meet rewards, was spent in the south. His fellow-countymen have within recent years raised an obelisk here to his memory. His name is rarely mentioned in print nowadays without the saving clause that he has no place among present readers and no hope among future ones, which is possibly true ; it would have been equally so at any period within ordinary memory. For I have some reason to remember how a youthful affection not yet quite scotched for the Roxburghshire bard was a subject of no little banter on the part of such companions, male and female, of those distant years, who fancied themselves as entitled, or perhaps bound, to treat with contempt the blank verse of a discarded age and method. But I treated the criticisms of these more bookish contemporaries of my callow teens with silent contempt, and flattered myself that they were incapable of appreciating this outdoor atmosphere of the Seasons and the fidelity of their imagery. At any rate, I carried about a well-thumbed pocket edition, which survives to this day, and, with an execrable memory for things printed, can still say by heart many passages that save for association I would gladly have replaced, had I been able, with verse more worthy of remembrance. One of these fragments is out of " Spring," where the poet retiring in fancy to his youth in Scotland goes a-fishing in April among the Cheviots. But after all the *genius loci*, to whose influence, wherever he may preside, I admit a lifelong susceptibility, may have had something to do

with this devotion. For the sarsen stone, upon which local tradition stoutly maintains that the poet was accustomed to sit when composing his "Spring," had been hauled down from its ancient perch overlooking "the plains of fair Augusta," *alias* Frances Lady Hertford, to whom he dedicated it, and set up beneath the very windows of those panelled chambers that had sheltered Thomson and have since witnessed the classical struggles and triumph of generations of British youth. This had been done doubtless when his cult was in vogue, in proud memory of his associations with the place. A nicer taste perhaps would have left it in undesecrated honour upon the green down above the Kennet. Monoliths to the superstitious in all countries are the very incarnation of occult influence. The spirit of Thomson could hardly have altogether neglected that tributary boulder on the public highway, which kept his memory if not his poems green, though shaved and scraped by the wheels of over-merry marketers and London and Bath coaches for many decades. For Lord Hertford, or rather his lady, as an amateur versifier as well as a great hostess, were among the poet's patrons and entertainers at their stately mansion at Marlborough, then recently rebuilt. By a curious turn of fortune it now forms the heart of the present School, and remains cherished and intact with its lawns, groves, and terraces, one of the most beautiful architectural specimens on a great scale of the Queen Anne period in England. The young Scots bard was enlisted to assist her Ladyship's compositions, and incidentally, as it turned out, to get forward with his own. But in course of time, so says a familiar tradition, the poet showed such a marked preference for his Lordship's company at the convivial board over the perhaps stilted intellectual atmosphere of the lady's boudoir,

that his invitations to Wiltshire ceased. There had been many Hertfords there since the days of the Protector Somerset, but it was a strange chance that a poet from the Scottish Marches should find a niche in the halls of the most destructive and merciless ravager of that country, if only as the cold-blooded agent of a truculent king, who ever lived.

Kelso is of a truth a goodly place to look upon, lying in the lap of a luxuriant undulating vale and on the very edge of the broad, brimming river, all astir here with the recent inrush of the Teviot. A clean, pleasant little town, with the most spacious of market squares in the centre, while the ruinous tower and shattered gables of the once great Norman abbey, brutally destroyed by successive English raids, still rise pathetically above its roofs. The opulent woods of country seats almost enclose the town. To the south of the river is Springwood, through whose pleasant glades the last reaches of the Teviot sparkle in bright coils, with the ruins of Roxburgh Castle, an English outpost for long and frequent periods, perched on the steeps above. . Adjoining the town on the farther side the umbrageous grounds of Floors Castle spread far and wide, while further to the north the woods of Stichell mantle upon their long, upstanding ridge. Unlike Melrose, which is pressed down between lofty hills, the Cheviots are some eight miles to the south of Kelso, and the Lammermoors, a little more to the northward, with Mersian territory filling the interval. The prospect from the long stone bridge at Kelso is charming, for the river is here expanded to a trifle beyond its natural width, and, running apace over a gravelly bottom, displays in the sunshine that touch of amber contributed perhaps by Teviot; while at the head of the reach, by a mill where the rivers unite, there is the bright gleam of rapids

Kelso Bridge.

spreading across from the meadowy shore on one side to the bowery garden walls of the town on the other. Facing downstream the river runs away to the foot of high, wooded steeps, to disappear from view.

But to return to Berwickshire and the road from Birgham which passes the village of Eccles, with its old kirk and general flavour of bygone importance. There was a flourishing nunnery here before the Reformation, which, like everything else in the country, was destroyed, together with the village, by Hertford in 1545. Some fragment of it, I believe, remains in the walls of the present mansion-house. The villages and little towns which Hertford and other raiders, official and private, burned were no doubt poor enough collections of huts, easily rebuilt and of small value compared to the stock and grain destroyed. But it was cruelly hard on the Scots, who had not yet accepted the Reformation and were still a Catholic country, to have had their splendid monasteries and quite tolerable store of good parish churches destroyed. For through all the bitter wars between the nations, with rare exceptions, Hexham Abbey, if I remember rightly, being one, these noble buildings on both sides of the Border were held inviolate. That Cromwell or Knox should do these things, was logical if deplorable, but that a set of unprincipled soldiers, whose quarrel with a faith they had practically not abandoned themselves had nothing religious about it, should wreak their iconoclastic rage upon a Catholic country with which they had no serious cause of quarrel at the time, was a blot upon the name of England. The unpardonable havoc wrought upon the sacred buildings of the Scottish Border, which is felt so grievously to-day, was a scandalous outrage. It is quite true that Scottish fanatics at a later period did some further mischief upon what was left,

and destroyed, I believe, a good deal in the North that no English invaders ever reached. But that was Scotland's concern, at any rate. It is curious, in view of these other performances, that Henry's policy towards Wales should have been so conspicuous for the wise measures by which it terminated the domestic turbulence and the political disabilities from which the Principality still suffered. But then this Tudor king was a Welshman—in Welsh eyes, at any rate, he stood for the triumph of their race and the fruition of their long-sounded prophecies. There are two "Borderlands" in the United Kingdom, and their respective prophets, so far as I know them, are singularly oblivious of one another's story. But contrasts and analogies are irresistibly tempting if one happens to have rambled a good deal in both the Welsh and Scottish Marches.

But let us hasten now, if with the mixed feelings inevitable to the occasion, to hail the amazing battlements of Hume Castle, which, lifted 600 feet upon its rocky perch above the distant bed of Tweed, proudly dominates a now wide-opening landscape. Nothing could be in more perfect harmony with the fitness of things than the pride of pose enjoyed by the empty shell of what was once the stronghold of the ruling House of the Eastern March. For the Merse here begins to shake itself free of its luxuriant enclosures, to shed much of its timber, and to break out anon into tracts of poorish upland that even the Scottish plough has flinched from. Here and there, too, are ridges of craggy outcrop, where the gorse blooms and Cheviot sheep nibble the short sward between the rocks. On one of these stands the shell of Hume Castle, the four curtain walls, that is to say, with portions of the corner-towers which formed, together with the interior offices, the usual plan of a Scottish feudal castle. Below its feet, standing pre-

cisely where it should stand for proper effect, is the little tributary village of a dozen ancient cottages, all, strange to relate, in the unusual head-dress of thatched roof, wavy and moss-grown and of the most approved picturesque type. It must be added, in all candour, that they do not look as if they would long justify their maintenance in so utilitarian an atmosphere as regards these things as that of the Merse. Indeed, one of their occupants informed me that the last man who understood thatching had recently deceased, which seems to settle the matter. When I last saw them, too, they were ablaze with flowers, as if the inmates felt a proper sense of responsibility in occupying such picturesque survivals.

On every side green carpets of sward slope sharply upward to meet the grey walls of the four-cornered pile. But, alas! truth must prevail, and these imposing walls were in great part re-erected out of the old material on the original foundations a century or so ago. This was a wholly laudable and artistically legitimate enterprise: but why those terrible mock battlements that must make the passing traveller of ordinary perception upon far-distant ways—so conspicuous is Hume Castle—rub his eyes and wonder if he had eaten something perilous at his dinner over night? There surely never were such nightmare crenellations even on the comic opera stage. I wonder what Sir Walter thought of the last Earl of Marchmont's antiquarian equipment; for he must have been many a time and oft confronted by this specimen of it. But with a little determination, one can forget these pinchbeck accessories, some twenty feet long and ten feet high I should guess, seeing that there is only space for three of them on each of the four curtain walls! The effect otherwise, having in view the historic signi-

ficance of the Castle, is altogether satisfying. Yet why does the owner not hurl the excrescences down the steep and leave the parapet flat, like any other old castle that time has robbed of its battlements ?

Hume or Home Castle—for the middle vowel is virtually transmutable, the old pronunciation verging, I believe, between the two sounds—was built by the Earl of Dunbar, who in the thirteenth century married the estates of Home and took the name. To relate the

Hume Castle.

story of the building would be to tell that of Berwickshire. For the Homes, with the various branches that sprang from the original stock, were paramount in that county through all its lively times, and owned a goodly share of the land and of the pele towers and fortalices that still lift their shattered heads or show their grass-grown foundations all over it. Hume Castle seems to have been the chief abode of the head of the clan, and the rallying-place in times of stress to all of the name. It was more even than that. For as the chief Scottish

fortress in the Eastern March, everybody who was anybody in the heart or Border of Scotland must have sheltered there in peace or war at one time or another; and a good many illustrious Englishmen, who had no business there at all, paid it the compliment of a short visit. The heads of the clan became barons in the fifteenth century and earls at the Union of the Crowns. The prominent and mysterious part taken by Lord Home at Flodden will be fresh in the reader's memory. When the Lord Home of the day took sides in the ever-shifting turmoil of Scottish politics, which were generally in the end settled by the sword, most of Berwickshire followed him. But the men of the Merse, as Borderers, were not precisely on the same footing, just as they were not quite the same sort of men as the pastoral people of the dales—of the Middle and Western Marches, that is to say. Even the dialect differs. Every schoolboy, whether English or Scotch, knows that the Percies fought the Douglases. But they and their successors did not usually go due north across the Tweed, nor yet raise the bulk of their hardy following in East Northumberland. They went up through the dales and glens of the Cheviots, through Tyne and Rede and Coquet, against the dalesmen of Roxburgh, who visited them in like manner by the same rugged ways. The barrier of the Tweed was, in fact, tolerably well guarded against private feuds and forays. Berwick, with its strong English interests and garrison and the strong castles of Norham and Wark, to say nothing of the often-unfordable river, made the Eastern March a rather awkward country for light-hearted foragers. The common folk of the Merse were tillers of the soil, stolid and brave enough, but they were not "riding men" in the sense of those who followed the Scotts and Kerrs and Douglases, and regarded such enter-

prises both as their pastime and as a branch of business. In regular international wars the Mersemen bore the chief brunt, and for obvious reasons suffered most when things went wrong. Undoubtedly they took part in a good deal of desultory fighting, but forays were not the distinguishing feature of the Eastern March that they were further westward. The Berwickshire hind followed the plough and would probably not have fretted if left in peace to follow it. His superiors, though war was their trade and fortified towers their habitation, found martial entertainment in rather different sources, and were not accustomed to cross the Border when the moon was full or the larder was empty—partly, no doubt, for the good reason already given, that the line of Tweed was difficult to get through. In short, the Mersemen, as they were not generally graziers or experts at driving cattle through a wild country in the wrong direction, so they were not raiders in the same sense as their neighbours, and had little share in that heady existence which song and story has so illuminated. The dalesmen to the westward, as we know, were on such intimate terms of hostility with their Northumbrian neighbours, and so like them in word and deed and thought and outlook, that a sort of *camaraderie* existed of which neither the men of Coldingham or Swinton on the one side, nor those of Bamburgh or of Belton on the other, knew anything. We are told that the Charltons, Swinburnes, Robsons, and the like of the one side, the Kerrs and Scotts and Elliots of the other, shouted each other "to-names" and bandied about rude chaff as neighbours familiar with one another's idiosyncrasies, as they cracked each other's skulls. It is common knowledge that these lawless souls, a scourge very often to their respective governments, were under a half-suspicion

of not always regarding a national war from a national point of view. In short, though they lived in almost perpetual conflict with one another in their own fashion, they were not so much concerned with high politics, and might conceivably be lukewarm or even succumb to a common and fraternal instinct if some tempting convoy of baggage-carts or the like loomed near. Men who even played football matches with one another in interludes of amity, it is quite evident, had a code as well as a method of life which placed them apart and often as much at odds with their nominal rulers in Edinburgh or Westminster as with the "auld enemie."

Hume Castle, to be sure, is getting on towards the westerly country. From its high rock you can look out towards the old forests of Jed and Ettrick, blue and dim beyond the rich vale of Tweed. But it is the symbol of rather a different past, bloody as it was, and a different order of people, as any Borderer will tell you they are to-day. I take it that, with their neighbours of East Lothian and East Northumberland, the Merse-men are as pure Saxon with as little else in them as any breed in Britain. Beyond Kelso a Scandinavian colony settled, coming up from the west coast. And as a last word on that meeting-place of the waters of Tweed and Teviot, and an important one in Border defence, it may be noted that Roxburgh Castle was held for generations as an English outpost and this little bit of Scotland regarded as English ground. This made it, of course, a fierce bone of contention, and James II. of Scotland was killed by the bursting of a gun before its walls in a siege which finally restored it to the Scotch, who destroyed it. The king's widow meantime mourned his fate and her own up here in Hume Castle. The sixteenth century, which cost the Merse so dear,

was naturally a strenuous time for its chief fortress. The widow of the fourth Lord Home held it for a time against the Protector Somerset. Her son, the next heir, regained it and killed the English garrison. This was the time of improved artillery, and the old castle got a succession of hammerings, the Earl of Sussex giving it a severe one in 1569 with heavy guns and taking possession. After the English Civil War, Colonel Fenwick of Northumberland appeared before Hume Castle and demanded its surrender in Cromwell's name. It was in the charge of a Cockburn, who returned a defiant answer, enclosing with it some doggerel that still has the ear of the local swain. In his letter Cockburn intimated that he knew nothing about Cromwell, and that Hume Castle "stood upon a rock." This significant statement was thus further emphasised:—

> "I, Willie Wastle,
> Stand firm in my Castle,
> And a' the dogs o' your town
> Will no bring Willie Wastle down."

Willie Wastle unfortunately climbed down with great celerity on this occasion, and the castle was finally sleighted, and his great poetic effort flatters his memory. The hapless but energetic Queen Mary, like her cousin of England, though often in far different fashion, visited so many castles within her domain that the irreverent tourist is tempted to the same trite pleasantries with the local handbook. But the beds this poor lady slept in, are at any rate nothing like so numerous as those still held sacred to the great but deplorably mean Eliza. I do not think Mary ever stopped at Hume, but the accomplished Maitland of Lethington, so long her faithful adviser, was here on one occasion at least, conducting that protracted correspondence with Cecil during that crisis in Anglo-Scottish affairs of which

Mr. Skelton has given us so many illuminating fragments.[1] But what will touch the ordinary imagination much more than this, is the fact that Hume Castle always carried ready for the torch upon its ramparts one of the bale, or beacon fires of the Scottish Border. Macaulay, when he fired our youthful souls with his stirring lines on the Armada, fired at the same time with the utmost dramatic effect the misty summits of the Welsh mountains and the top of Skiddaw.

He must have had in his mind a Georgian jubilee or a Coronation ! It would have been of small practical utility laying beacon-fires which took an hour and a half to reach at the critical moment and were rather more likely than not to be wrapped in clouds. The official bale-fires kept ready for use in South-Eastern Scotland began at St. Abb's Head; the next was on Dowlaw Hill; the third and fourth were North Berwick Law and Tranent, in East Lothian, which we shall meet with later. Whether Hume Castle, which was another, could respond to Dowlaw, I doubt; perhaps it had its own signal in the Tweed valley. The last time the beacon-fire blazed from its ramparts has stamped itself upon the memory of the north for all time, and the incident is, of course, elaborated by Scott in the closing chapter of *The Antiquary.*

The author himself, as an enthusiastic volunteer and participant in that exciting twenty-four hours, gives in the appendix the actual occurrences on which he based the invasion scare which so delightfully closes our acquaintance with Jonathan Oldbuck. At the moment of extreme tension and expectation of invasion during the Napoleon wars, and when the volunteers all round the coast of Britain were on the alert and the old beacon-fires ready for the torch, that of Hume

[1] *Maitland of Lethington* (Skelton).

Castle suddenly blazed forth into the night—that of February 2, 1803. The inland and northern beacons taking up the signal, the volunteers, cavalry and infantry, of the whole Border on both sides sprang to arms with such despatch and enthusiasm that Dalkeith and Berwick, the two rallying-posts, were crowded with soldiery from several counties by the following mid-day, when it was realised that it had been a false alarm. Scott himself, as an officer in the Edinburgh Light Horse, which he had helped to raise, was there; and it was probably, at least till the mistake was discovered, the happiest day of his life. It seems that an accidental fire in Northumberland, near the spot where a beacon was situated, was the cause of an unintentional practical joke that at any rate proved the practical patriotism of the North; for the distances ridden and the long marches covered at an inclement season by some of these zealous Borderers are worthy of remembrance.

Easily visible, indeed prominent enough four miles away to the south-westward, is another knubbly upstanding ridge, on whose higher summit a dim object can be just descried. This is Smailholm Tower, upon the farm of Sandy Knowe. I don't know whether the pulse of the Scott lover will quicken at the sound of the names—it ought to. But I frankly admit that to myself, hitherto unfamiliar with this corner of Berwickshire, and with but a vague memory of Scott's early association with it, Smailholm came as a delightful revelation. We will dispense with the four miles of twisting byway through a ridgy country which, after crossing the Eden, lands one at the homestead of Sandy Knowe. I don't think this spot is included in the route laid out for visitors to the Scott country, though it is only five miles from Dryburgh, nor catered for, nor mentioned in the programme. Certainly there is no trace of them,

nor mark of pilgrim feet. But Sandy Knowe, with its uplifted pele tower, is surely at the very heart of things! For here abode Scott's uncle, the tenant of the farm to whose care the delicate and partially crippled lad used frequently to be consigned for long periods, as a salutary change from the close atmosphere of his father's house in the Old Town at Edinburgh. Here he breathed in deep draughts the strong breezes of that

Dryburgh Abbey.

Border atmosphere which possibly made him, physically and intellectually. The south of Scotland might almost have been ransacked for an abode more calculated to inspire an imaginative child than this one here. Not for what it is in itself, but for the significance of its situation, for its suggestive foreground, for its gloriously expansive outlook. A comfortable-looking, fair-sized farm-house near the ridge of a long, windy sweep of fields, but itself snugly sheltered in a grove of trees,

it looks out to the south and west over the whole Border country and the long course of Tweed. But even this can hardly have been so potent an influence on the childhood and youth of such a man as the extraordinary distinction with which the foreground of his then limited sphere of action had, as it were, composed itself. It seemed to me, on walking out at the back of the homestead on to this rocky upland pasture for the first time, as if the secret of Scott's life and work were suddenly revealed, and it was altogether a surprise and a delight. What scene—" meet nurse " indeed " for a poetic child "—could be imagined more calculated to kindle the germ of a genius like that of Scott. The outlook from Sandy Knowe might stand for an actual illustration of half his work. For the immediate foreground upon one side was bounded by the wall of high craggy ridges in which the sweep of the farm lands terminated, and at their highest point, thrust far up against the whirling clouds, was a massive and perfect Border pele. A few minutes' walk over the rocky sheep pasture, where Scott as a merry, precocious child, backward in the use of his legs, was wont to be laid on a plaid all day with the shepherd's eye upon him, brings you to the more precipitous crag on which the tower is set. If the view southwards from the house itself, over the vales of Tweed and Teviot and the Northumbrian hills, was a fitting one for the future prophet and poet of Scotland, that from Smailholm Tower adds to it the whole tempestuous and romantic heart of the Scottish Marches—that sea of dim hills and ranges which, seen from here, fills all the visible portion of the counties of Peebles, Selkirk, and Roxburgh. But that grim tower, as it would appear from the windows on a wild day against a wild sky, must have made a background indeed to those tales of olden

days with which Scott tells us his grandmother at Sandy Knowe used to fascinate him.

On summer days, too, how accessible was this old pele to the solitary imaginative child, with no sound about it but the hum of wild bees, the bleat of sheep, and the tinkle of the "wee burnie" that runs down into a large pool in the cleft, and with half the Marches

Smailholm Tower.

lying at his feet! Smailholm had been a mere name to me hitherto—just a farm in the country where Scott was sent for his health as a boy; nothing that I remembered to have heard or read, to my shame, had prepared me for anything like this and the significance of the whole thing in relation to Scott's temperament.

The reader may be reminded that Scott's father, a lawyer, lived in the sombre and cramped precincts of

the "Old Town" at Edinburgh, and had a large family. Walter for some years was the weakly one of the flock, and country air was the treatment prescribed. His grandfather, though of good blood, had been tenant of Smailholm, which was still occupied by the widow and a daughter, while a son, who was a factor near-by, overlooked the farm. So the boy Walter was practically adopted for the time by these good ladies, and though for the sake of his lame leg absent at Bath for a year or two, was back again at Sandy Knowe for a period before finally rejoining the family circle in Edinburgh, at the age of eight. But there were constant visits afterwards to his good aunt, though she moved later to Kelso. Scott credits both Sandy Knowe and Kelso, practically within sight of one another, as being the main source of that inspiration which made him what he was and delighted a world for generations past and to come. At Sandy Knowe he seems to have absorbed no small amount of Border lore and tradition from various veterans of the neighbourhood, in addition to that emanating from the prolific memory of his relatives. If Sandy Knowe is not included in the "Scott country," for which I have no doubt the occupant is devoutly thankful, the pilgrim does occasionally come here; for in the top storey of the tower I found a small tradesman from Glasgow and a young daughter. The opportunity for a chance test of the modern Scotch schoolgirl's attitude towards her patron saint was naturally embraced, or at any rate served as an excuse for a passing civility. So, feigning ignorance as to whether Smailholm Tower was the subject of any of the poet's verse, I was promptly referred to the "Eve of St. John," which was satisfactory. The tower is architecturally a good specimen of its class, and in better condition than most, and of three storeys. A spiral

stone staircase leads up to the first and second, which are both floored. The fireplaces are tolerably perfect and the stonework of the windows uninjured, while in one of them the original ironwork remains. It belonged in old days to the Pringles. Nature has limited and prescribed the size of the barmykin, the entrance to which still survives, for one side of the crag on which the tower stands is precipitous. But its chief glory is its lonely and uplifted site, and its character as a memorial to Scott more truly significant than the proudest which a grateful world has raised.

"And still I thought that shattered tower
The mightiest work in human power;
And marvelled, as the aged hind
With some strange tale bewitched my mind
Of forayers, who, with headlong force,
Down from that strength had spurred their horse,
Their southern rapine to renew,
Far in the distant Cheviots blue,
And, home returning, filled the hall
With revel, wassail-rout and brawl—
Methought that still with tramp and clang
The gateway's broken arches rang;
Methought grim features, seamed with scars,
Glared through the window's rusty bars.
And ever by the winter hearth,
Old tales I heard of woe or mirth,
Of lovers' sleights, of ladies' charms,
Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms;
Of patriot battles, won of old
By Wallace wight and Bruce the bold."

CHAPTER VI

ON THE WHITEADDER

If I were asked the best line of procedure for a passing glimpse of the Merse by some inquiring soul with an eye and a turn for rural economics and the things that make for the life of a country, I should know what to do. But in these gregarious, industrial, breathless days there are no such people—none, that is to say, wandering at large about Great Britain, as Young and Pennant and Cobbett wandered. There are plenty of them in the country. I know a good many who, if they found themselves at Berwick with a couple of days to spare—a most remote eventuality—would extract an immense amount of interest from a leisurely day's journey through the heart of the Merse. They would not be so staggered as upon a first encounter with East Lothian; but they would experience, particularly if they came from south of the Trent, a remarkable eye-opener, and I think would remember their little pilgrimage for the rest of their lives. I am not referring here to mere lovers of or dwellers in the country, rose-growers, artists, naturalists, antiquaries, sportsmen, or detached country gentlemen, or amateurs generally, between whom and the man I have in mind there is a great gulf in the appeal of a countryside outlook, but to the farming squire, the large farmer, the land agent, and such like. These folk are naturally disposed to make their annual holiday a violent contrast to their normal existence, and will then be found in Scarborough,

Paris, or Switzerland. Such a man, if accidentally captured, I would send through the Merse upon the almost straight road from Berwick to Kelso, not by the more picturesque and twisting ways beside the Tweed which we have just followed, nor yet again by the route nearer the foot of the Lammermoors, which I propose to follow in this chapter. There is not a vast deal of difference, but in the central road by Swinton the opulence of agriculture and great country seats is more continually in evidence, while the upper roads, though rich enough in both, have more of the scenic variety acceptable to the general traveller.

So going out of Berwick bounds through the parish of Mordington, in whose mansion Cromwell slept when his troops were in Berwick, and thence heading for Chirnside, the church and little village of Foulden makes the first appeal to notice of any consequence. If these country churches along the Border have generally but slim attraction in their modern disguise, they have quite often been the scene of international ceremonies of high importance. Peace and war have been decided, dynasties have been made or unmade within their walls, or at least within the foundations of some of these plain, unpretentious-looking kirks. At Foulden, for instance, the commissioners of Queen Elizabeth met those of James VI. in 1587, to explain and vindicate on the part of the English sovereign her wholly inexcusable butchery of Queen Mary. Foulden is another of those exceptions which confront us from time to time as if to mitigate the low æsthetic reputation of the Scottish village. For here a single row of quite pleasing cottage fronts look out upon a well-kept, level green. One might fancy this last a stage spread with a verdant carpet and shaded by a big tree or two fronting a superb drop-scene through which the vale

of Tweed glimmers away to the blue outstanding masses of Cheviot.

Foulden parish, like the others hereabouts, seems to have been a model Arcady eighty years ago. No inhabitant had been tried for a serious crime within the memory of man. There were practically no illegitimate births, though irregular marriages, as elsewhere along the Border, from the facilities offered, is as usual a cause of complaint by their excellent pastor. So too is emigration, with the old, old wail of the young and the robust being the chief deserters, attracted by the success of those who had already gone to Canada and prosperity. The wages of the men, though paid mostly in kind, were then equal to about twenty-one pounds a year; their food consisted of porridge and milk morning and night, with pease-bannocks, broth, and potatoes, seasoned with fat pork, for dinner, while every hind had a cow. If any one is so ingenuous as to imagine this a poor diet for a hard-working class, it would be useless to refer them to the physical qualities of the race it bred; for this, too, would probably be outside their range of observation. Nowadays the hinds' wages are very nearly thrice as much. He rarely keeps a cow. Neither he nor his family, not even the young children, as a rule, touch oatmeal porridge, or use any appreciable quantity of milk. Stewed tea, anæmic baker's bread, commercial jam, a little butcher's meat, and a good deal of tinned stuff roughly represents in the matter of dietary the trebling of a wage. In those halcyon days, when decorum, piety, and material content, according to their ministers, were the distinguishing traits of the Merse peasantry, one insidious and deplored vice was the "new and costly habit of tea-drinking, particularly among the women." The entire disappearance of games, on the other hand, is

lamented by the worthy incumbent of Foulden—an attitude which savours of the unexpected in an official of John Knox's communion living so much nearer the day of that truculent prophet. Particular regret is expressed by the good man at the lapse of the old game of ball, in which the villagers had been formerly accustomed to contend with the rest of the parish. Whether, as is probable, it was a bladder, to be carried and kicked, otherwise football, or a solid ball to be carried and flung, as in the old South Welsh game of Knappan, which also brought whole parishes into the field with like objects, is not mentioned; nor is the difference material. But the object of the indwelling side was to place the ball in the hopper of the mill on the Whiteadder, and that of the outdwellers to deposit it in the church pulpit. What shades of the old Covenanters buried under the windows would have thought of the final mêlée in such a godless conflict going forward in their very kirk is ill saying. In South Wales the respective churchyards of the two opposing parishes were the goals. Our Foulden pastor would find comfort, on that score at any rate, if he could return to earth and see the footballs flying in every direction. "Creeling" was still in vogue at this time—one of those ponderous practical jokes on newly-married couples that in various forms delighted the rustic in most parts of the island. A few nights after marriage the couple were visited by the gayer youth of the parish, the husband hauled out and a basket full of stones tied on his shoulders. This load, emblematical of the matrimonial responsibilities he had taken on himself, he was condemned to carry till his wife could cut the cords and release him, illustrating thereby how a good helpmeet could lighten her husband's burden. This virtually degenerated into the

extortion of a fine, which was readily paid to escape the nuisance.

In former days every hind, horsekeeper, or man employed by the year was required to find a "bondager," or, in other words, a woman to work whenever and for so long as his employer required. This condition, though greatly modified, is not yet absolutely dead, and the word "bondager," though still in general use

Berwickshire Bondagers, turnip-hoeing.

in Northumberland, has been toned down in the Merse to "worker." The bondager was and is, either wife, daughter, sister, or some spinster relative, and she is included in the written contract with the man. There are nothing like the number of them employed as of yore. But the regular female field-hand is still a common object of the countryside, earning wages of two shillings a day with tolerable regularity. This, added to the man's wages, or "gains" as the saying now goes, means a pretty substantial weekly income

coming into the same household. In turnip-singling, potato planting and lifting, hay-making and harvest, the bondager is in daily evidence in the fields. And again in autumn, handling the turnips or potatoes in the pits, or threshing in the steading or forking manure in the yards, she is constantly at work. They are mostly young women, but occasionally you see an old crone on whose furrowed face the storms and sunshines of forty or fifty seasons have left their mark. A quaint and uniform dress has distinguished these rural Amazons ever since I can remember, and doubtless for long before that. In the Merse and Northumberland, however, though not in East Lothian, they have made a notable change in head-gear.

In place of the poke-bonnet and blue "ugly," they have adopted a brown straw hat with turned-down brim, over which a pink scarf is bound and pulled down over their ears and neck, and at the same time brought round to cover their chins up to the mouth in semi-oriental fashion. Below this, giving a further touch of colour, comes a blue blouse belted at the waist, short linsey-woolsey skirts to their knees, thick woollen stockings, and hob-nailed boots. They look as ruddy and stalwart as of old, but are said to have lost much of the prodigious stamina of their predecessors in the less nourishing diet and the pernicious influence of the baker's and grocer's carts, which have superseded the porridge and milk and home-made bread. Comparative financial affluence and nearly the whole wage being now paid in cash, has demoralised the dietary of the labouring class as well as much of the simple culinary skill the women once possessed. Porridge is now despised, nor is a cow any longer kept, its keep value having been commuted for cash, very little of which, I am told, is expended upon milk. It is genteel

to buy white bread from the baker, and saves no end of trouble. A married hind of perhaps forty, whose position spoke for his worth, and who had himself apparently drawn a prize in the matrimonial lottery, poured forth to me his contempt of the present-day country girls as the wives and prospective wives of working men. That was in East Lothian. Even in 1834 there seems to have been practically no one in these parishes unable to read and write. There were also well-patronised village libraries of standard authors; and if theology was a leading ingredient, it was, in matter and style at any rate, worthy the mental exercise induced by it, which was considerable. The Scotch parish schools, as every one knows, were formerly very superior to those of England. The old-fashioned dominie could not only teach Latin and the Higher Mathematics, but very often Greek, and sent up promising boys from the village to the universities. The English schools have been revolutionised, and the Scottish have been stereotyped on much the same system, and there is now, I believe, no difference in quality between them. In Scotland nowadays, as in England, speaking with but slight metaphor, the roadsides are littered with the garish covers of the cheap trash that has stood in the path of the modern educationist and three parts thwarted his worthy endeavours.

The Whiteadder all this time, away down upon our left hand and hidden from view, frets with strong current in its deep, narrow, woody vale. It turns the wheels just here of Edington Mill, which grinds the grain of the neighbourhood; while Edington Mains, with its ample steading beside the highway, recalls a name familiar enough in North British agriculture in bygone days.

Chirnside is the largest village, and by far the most elevated in the Merse. Crowning an isolated ridge

600 feet above the sea, its half-mile of bald roof and gable, unrelieved by a touch of foliage, cuts the sky-line in cold and cheerless fashion. One looks up at it notching the ridge of long, upsweeping fields, immaculate in their cultivation, and shudders as one thinks of the east winds of spring. It is, in truth, a long, unlovely substantial village, lying drear and wind-swept above a lovely land. The church and tree-girt manse, a little way down the slope, make a redeeming feature. The former has been well restored, and retains such small portions of old Norman work as had been spared in the changes wrought since the Reformation. It now makes a brave display, and is a landmark for miles.

Chirnside boasts of several celebrities, worthy and unworthy. David Hume, the philosopher and historian, was a son of the laird of Ninewalls, which is within easy view near the foot of the hill. He lived and wrote here a good deal, and the present minister told me that his name was on record as up for "Kirk discipline," on account of some amour with a local Phyllis. This fitted in nicely with the fact that he wrote part of his *Enquiry concerning the Principle of Morals* at Ninewalls. There is also a monument to David Erskine, once minister here, in the churchyard, and notable as father of the two brothers who led the first secession from the Church of Scotland. Wild things have happened here even since the old Border days. About the year 1700, one David Spence was laird of West Mains, now, I think, the farm known as Ninewalls Mains adjoining the village. He was a pretty rake, and kept company with another spark of similar propensities, Sir Robert Lauder, of Edington, recently mentioned. Spence, however, married a wife who undertook to reform him. Her initial step in this praiseworthy endeavour was to slam the door in Lauder's face at his first visit and

refuse him admittance in her husband's name! This was not to be borne by the heady laird of Edington, who forced his way in and shot his former friend through the heart. Remorse, however, was instantaneous. For mounting his horse he galloped to Berwick, and, shouting through the streets that he had killed the prettiest man in the Merse, he flung himself over Berwick bridge into the Tweed, whose waters closed for ever above his hapless head.

A more recent notability of Chirnside, some forty years deceased, and of altogether another complexion, was Dr. Henderson, country doctor, philosopher, antiquary, and poet, who published some sixty years ago two little volumes, now extremely rare, out of a mass of manuscripts that have never seen the light. Let us hope that one day they will achieve some partial publication. For the county of Berwick is extraordinarily deficient for so historically rich a region in printed matter relating to its past from any point of view. There is nothing even resembling a county history. Sir George Douglas of Springwood has done this service for the three counties to the westward. But the seaboard shire of the March lying upon the most trodden of all the old blood-stained international highways yet awaits the labours of some zealous son of the soil. Dr. Henderson's son, who lives at Chirnside, kindly allowed me such a cursory glance at some of these manuscripts as the occasion allowed. How rare are these admirable people, so fashioned that their native county or district provides an inexhaustible mine of affectionate interest and study of its people, its customs, antiquities, scenery, birds, beasts, and flowers —not literally, perhaps, experts over so wide a range, though some few come to the mind in various parts that are indeed all this and more. Every country-

side has happily a few who have eyes to see and ears to hear in this sense of the word, and ask for nothing better. And what could be better than to use and enjoy these too rare faculties and this happy temperament upon the soil that bred them and for love of it.

There are not many sages of this kind in the county of Berwick, though you might fancy it would be thick with them. The prospect from Chirnside, for a site where nearly a thousand souls cluster, is remarkable. You may brush aside the unromantic aspect of the long, drear-looking street and fancy the women gathering from lines of thatched cabins on this bleak height and straining their eyes over the wide-stretching plain, now so radiant in woodland and tillage, but then carrying scarce a stick of timber. It requires no effort to picture the excitement and suspense of the whole non-combatant, stay-at-home portion of the hilltop village, as its menfolk come straggling back across the open and up the long slope—or do not come back—from one of those many sanguinary battles fought almost within sight. The roar of artillery with which Flodden opened must have been audible enough, and even its smoke-clouds plainly visible, from here, while every fighting man in Chirnside beyond a doubt was with this Earl of Home in that first victorious charge and its mysterious sequel—

> "What anxious mothers here have stood;
> What new-made widows here have sighed."

And I think it will be admitted that even Scott could not have recalled the frequent scene in a simple couplet more felicitously than the local bard whose memory we have just invoked. A mile away, in the valley below, the Blackadder and the Whiteadder unite their restless streams beneath Allanton bridge and glitter

away over a mile of open meadow before plunging into the deep and woody channels of Edington and Hutton. I have been many times at Chirnside, or round about it, in the past few years, and indeed quite recently spent a fortnight hard by it for the mere pleasure of exploring a region always good to look upon, and rich in old memories, even though their landmarks too often are but heaps of stone or a crumbling wall. For the plough of the Merse has been less tolerant of the past than the shepherds of Tyne and Rede, of Jed or Ettrick. A husbandman of the Merse, too, is undoubtedly shorter memoried, than the horseman and the shepherd of the Middle March.

The rents of this particular district, I find, ran from 3s. to 5s. an acre in the middle of the eighteenth century; while quite early in the next one they are reported at from £3 to £4, and sometimes more, and have hovered round those figures ever since. This speaks conclusively for the activity of the plough and the improver, and is but a fair sample expressed in plain arithmetic of the astounding leap of Scotland within the possible lifetime of a very old man, from backward poverty to the very van of progress. One might illustrate these two positions by the respective figures of a shilling and a pound without fear of criticism. The material development of English life between the accession of George III. and the death of George IV., great as it was, becomes almost as nothing compared to the transformation of Scotland in the same period. It is curious how little this quite sensational chapter in British history is realised, which sets forth how completely within the span of a single long life the northern kingdom turned the tables on her more favoured southern neighbour;—how the once accepted, nay, the eagerly sought after teachers in

agriculture became the taught, and the once jeered-at, microscopic rent-rolls of the north swelled to figures that became the envy of Norfolk and Lincolnshire in their proudest days. How far Scotsmen outside a small circle realise this quite dramatic performance and triumph of their ancestors, I would not venture to say. I know a great many and of many kinds, and feel compelled to remark, with all the risk so hardy a suggestion entails, that a sense of these things does not seem very strong within most of them. But after all the majority of folks, whether Scotch or English, care nothing at all for the past, certainly not for a past of mere unembellished fact, though they may owe their present condition to it. To apply the term dramatic to a revolution that had in great part its origin in a timely enthusiasm for lime and Swedish turnips and subsoil-draining will sound like bathos beside the theological strife which prolonged poverty and misery and the gorgeous pageants which accompanied the truculence of Whig and Jacobite and made things extremely unpleasant for everybody.

Chirnside stands perched at the very edge of the Merse of strict interpretation—the region, that is to say, between Tweed and Whiteadder. Seaward the land soon springs aloft to the long high ridge of Halidon and Lamberton, which shuts out the coast. And as you descend the long hill on the Duns road, if it were not for the stately avenue of trees that, as if in apology for the nakedness of the village above it, spread a leafy screen upon either side, this rough demarcation of the old topographers would explain itself. For away to the right—to the east, speaking broadly—spreads a higher, bleaker, poorer stretch of arable country, in touch and sympathy with Coldingham, rising to the foothills of the Lammermoors, and sending its own little burn, the

Billiemere, sideways into the Eye, not into the Whiteadder. In this belt of country, with the tree-sheltered homesteads sprinkled thinly over the great, bare, clean-looking farms, there were terrible hard knocks going in old days. For it rolls away to the mouth of the Pease Pass, so often referred to as the gateway into the heart of Scotland. The remains of the castles of Billie and Bunkle, mere grass-grown foundations in the one case and rude fragments in the other, still speak to the infrequent pilgrim; while around them in summer the oblivious bondager singles swedes in cheerful groups, or the phlegmatic hind lays his shining furrow over the clean autumn ley—

> "Bunkle, Billie, and Blanerne,
> Three castles strong as airn,
> Built when Davy was a bairn:
> They'll a' gang doon
> In Scotland's croon,
> And ilka one shall be a cairn."

Blanerne survives on the banks of the Whiteadder, and its less mangled remains are still cherished in the grounds of the family whose ancestors built it and descendants still own it. In the woody gorge a mile or so from Chirnside, where the Duns road crosses the broad, rocky channel of the Whiteadder, a paper-mill rears its unsightly chimney, which pours forth into the rural calm with ceaseless industry (for which, no doubt, one ought to give praise) an unsavoury cloud. I remember coming on it unawares out of the bed of the river, in my youth, with much resentment and vague foreboding. But nothing has happened. Nothing more, I mean, outside its baleful presence; for the Whiteadder, up or down, is as fair and fresh to look upon as it was then, and what is yet more remarkable contains, I really think, as many trout. Everybody told me so;

though the angler is notoriously a pessimist. For if the *laudator temporis acti* prevails anywhere, it is upon the banks of fast-running trout streams, whether preserved or otherwise. But the Whiteadder, like some other southern Scottish rivers, is virtually open to the world for about five-sixths of its forty-mile course, strips of private water in the actual policies of country houses here and there comprising the lesser part. And the "world" in the sense here used means absolutely the most trout-fishing people on the face of the globe. I admit to misdoubting the local oracles, though they were not hotel proprietors with an axe to grind, but humble sportsmen who had less than none. But I was wrong. To those outside the fraternity this may seem a trivial point. But to the angler familiar with trout and all that concerns them, it will, I know, seem incredible that a river running through civilisation, within call of first-class roads, in these days of swift machines, to say nothing of propinquity to a railroad for much of its course, can furnish reasonable sport to all and sundry, generation after generation. The more they know, the more sceptical will they be. And unless piscatorially familiar with the south of Scotland, they have probably never seen a whole population armed with rods, or with a rod at home—a condition due, no doubt, to the facilities traditionally extended to them. I greatly doubt if an owner would now venture to close more of his river than custom seems to approve of. I am speaking for the moment only of Berwickshire, which is watered by three notable tributaries of the Tweed and any number of smaller streams and burns, every one stocked with trout. The outcry would not be worth encountering, nor the trifling gain to the owners in any proportion to the loss to a generally well-behaved public. If some *novus homo* from New-

castle should peradventure come into possession here, and bring with him the extravagant notions of the sanctity of even inaccessible hill-burns nowadays prevalent in Northumberland, he might have a surprise in store. How far this tradition of open waters extends to the middle and western Border counties I do not know, but I think quite a little. But it has answered admirably in Berwickshire. The lairds in some cases reserve a home stretch for themselves, which waters are, I think, not only piously respected by the fishing public, but regarded as a valuable sanctuary for keeping up the stock. But even so, as an old fisherman with from peculiar circumstances a wider general acquaintance than any mere fishing enterprises could well give, among the rapid rivers of England and Wales, the sustained fertility of the Whiteadder, the Leader, the Eye, and other delightful and romantic Berwickshire streams, under their uniquely liberal traditions, I admit, utterly confounds me. Little bits of open water sandwiched in between preserves, such as you may occasionally find in similar streams elsewhere, are conceivable as being reasonably stocked, though, as a matter of fact, they are generally next to useless. A proposal to throw open the Dart, the Exe, the Towy, the Dove, the Ribble, or any other of a score of prototypes of the Whiteadder that occur to one, with an idea that they would continue to provide quite reasonable sport, would be regarded as the suggestion of a lunatic by the most liberal-minded and sanguine expert. Yet none of these have such a number of potential anglers in touch with them as actually ply a rod upon these Border streams. I myself should certainly have held such a proposal nowadays as that of one demented. But these Berwickshire rivers upset one's fundamental notions. I do not know what to

think. For their physical conditions are in all essentials identical with scores of streams in England and Wales: the same water, the same banks and bottom, the same multitude of feeders big and little, the same climatic conditions. As to efficient drainage and rapid carrying away of flood water, which is a generally recognised agency in reducing a stock of fish, the drainage of the upland Scottish farms is infinitely more efficient than

The Whiteadder near Broom.

that obtaining in the comparatively backward agriculture of the small farmers of Wales or Devonshire.

Where lies the mystery? In the early seventies I used myself to haunt the higher waters of the Whiteadder a great deal, and in after years, with the wider experience they bring of things in general, often wondered, on looking back, how the sport came to be so good with so many rods even then busy at work, to say nothing of the occasional competitions of fishing clubs from Edinburgh. I vaguely put it down as one of those mysteries pertaining to "the good old days," like the rest of us. It has entertained me vastly to find to-day upon the same waters men not then born

harbouring strange fancies of that period as a primitive epoch, when fishermen were scarce and the river stiff with fish that would "rise at your hat," as the anglers' idiom has it. This is all moonshine. There were heaps of fishermen—too many on occasions, as one even then thought—from Edinburgh, Newcastle, and elsewhere, full of zeal and skill, and as well equipped for all practical purposes as their successors to-day. Then, too, the elder ones at least, as they began to warm with the second tumbler, talked of the "good old days"; but I fancy their reminiscent moods really did deal with a more elementary period. Stewart, the best trout-fisher in Scotland, whose little classic was re-edited by the late Mr. Earle Hodgson not long ago, was then still by the riverside, making, as it proved, his last casts upon the Berwickshire streams. Twenty years before he had written that the immense increase in the number of fishermen threatened to alter all the conditions of which he was treating. Well, the Whiteadder still flows on, fresh, beautiful, and sequestered as ever, unconscious of the passing of generations and of their prophets of good and evil. And it still offers to the angler simple or gentle who treads its banks or wades its streams, as pleasant and nearly as profitable days, if he knows his business, as Stewart sixty years ago was convinced that he saw the end of. If the expert on a good day in the best months can kill with fly his twelve or fourteen pounds weight, which he undoubtedly still does, any one sufficiently knowledgeable to be interested at all in such matters, will understand that such a river must be, as indeed it is, well stocked. The secret of its fecundity, in face of such continuous and sustained attention, is, as I have said, inscrutable. I make a present of the problem to the angling reader. Most likely he will not believe me, and I shall fully

sympathise with his incredulity. But perhaps *credo quia absurdum est* may be his final and better judgment.

Though July is the second worst fishing month, and I did not and should not go to Chirnside at any month for that purpose, yet the temptation to throw a fly once more on a river so intimately associated with far-away memories was irresistible. So one afternoon, when a night's rain had put a little fresh water into the Whiteadder's depleted streams, washed the dust from the roadside hedges, freshened up the thirsting potato-fields, and put the last sown turnips out of reach of the fly, I betook me to the waterside. Now, Broome House is about four miles up the river, which running mostly out of sight of highways, in its green secluded vale, is tapped anon by branching lanes that pitch downward to some ford with stepping stones or swinging foot-bridge. From the road which leads to Preston village and thence up into the wild heart of the Lammermoors, one of these same byways branches off and dives abruptly down a woody brae, beneath which the river flashes in broad and wimpling shallows and deep rock-ribbed pools. Among the meadows on the farther shore, embowered in wood, stands an ancient seat of the Homes, though now represented by a modern mansion in which the original pele tower is somewhere embedded. But it was not Broome House itself on this occasion, nor altogether the fishable qualities of the stretch of river which washes its woods and green haughs, that took me there. I had a fancy for hunting up the reputed grave, if its memory still survived among the ancients, of that French Warden of the March, De la Beauté, otherwise Anthony d'Arcy, who fell at the hands of the infuriated Homes in the days of the Regent Albany; for this is a famous Border incident. I failed to find the mortuary cairn, partly because the

only wights I encountered were fishermen who had never heard of it, and had obviously no soul for "anshent things" as the Welsh peasant has it, and partly that I fell prematurely a-fishing myself, and stuck to it. Though it was a bright and steamy July afternoon there was quite a little rise on—enough at any rate to keep my feet from wandering upon so vague an antiquarian quest. But this is the popular story.

Now in the days of James V., after the catastrophe of Flodden Field, the Regent Albany had been rash enough to behead an Earl of Home and confiscate his estates, and foolish enough to appoint a French favourite of his own Warden of the March in his place. This was Anthony d'Arcy, commonly known, in accordance with the Scottish love of to-names, as the Sieur de la Beauté from his handsome person. A family row was going merrily forward at Langton Castle, now a noble modern mansion near Duns, and the interference of the Warden becoming necessary, "Bawtie," as the vulgar tongue had it, came down with a strong force from Kelso. Failing to persuade David Home of Wedderburn and his faction, who were besieging Langton, to go home in peace, he proceeded to the use of threats, which coming from a usurping foreigner made the blood of the already outraged Homes boil within them. So brooding on their wrongs, Wedderburn and his friends after a little interval, and to the number of only a score, made a furious onslaught on Bawtie's party, most of whom being Scotsmen and half-hearted in his service, decamped. There was nothing then left for the Warden to rely upon but the speed of his horse, a fine animal that had once belonged to the slaughtered Earl of Home. And then began a great race. Starting from the Carnie Ford, two miles beyond Duns, Bawtie led his pursuers through the streets of the town and

thence three more miles to the "Stoney land" about Broome. The story has it that Bawtie would have outpaced his pursuers if his horse had carried normal saddlery, and not been weighed down by the pomp of French trappings. As it so fell out, the first to come up with him was a young page of Wedderburn's, who had been left at home, but, on getting news of the sport, had seized a sword and jumped on his master's best horse. Riding for a long time a breast race with Bawtie, the lad kept the Warden so busy parrying his thrusts that his horse fell with him over some unseen stones. Springing to his feet, the Frenchman did little more than hold the courageous youth at bay, till two of the Home brothers came up and overpowered him, cut his head off and carried it back through Duns, to be exposed over the gate of Wedderburn Castle. The body was buried where it fell; and the pile of stones which is said to mark it was the goal I had vaguely aimed at.

Instead of this I found myself with the lengthening shadows seated upon a grassy bank beside the stream, beneath one of those great spreading ash trees which flourish so conspicuously on the Whiteadder's banks, and watching the clear amber water sweeping over rocks and slabs of many colours into a wide heaving pool, of whose "finny tribe," as Thomson would have said, I had just taken trifling toll. The slanting sunbeams quivered on the open restless shallows, and shot long stray shafts of gold beneath the low branching foliage upon the dark shadowed depths of the pool. A heron with slow-moving wings passed lazily overhead. Confiding conies popped in and out of the red burrows in the bank. A white-breasted water-ouzel—water-crow as the rustics hereabouts inaptly style him—nodded and bobbed at me from a mossy stone after the humoursome fashion

of his tribe, and some milk cows, on the way, doubtless, to the pail, crunched at the grass behind in sociable propinquity. The lush languor of high summer reigned supreme. It was not a moment to muse on Bawtie and his mangled corpse, or of swords and blood and fierce unbridled passions, or on the Lady Chatelaine and her bairns, whom history relates the ferocious Evers deliberately immolated when he burned this very pele tower of Broome. I had seven or eight nice little fish upon the grass, one shapely prize nearly a pound weight that had given me some heated minutes in troubled waters. The trout had recovered from their fright in the pool below, and in the curling water under the tips of the pendent willow boughs had begun to dimple its surface as if it were a duke's preserve, and not the threshing-floor of generations of happy, sport-loving rustics and decent citizens of Arcadian tastes from far towns. They are tolerably well-educated little fellows to be sure, and hatched, no doubt, with the hereditary germs of wisdom within them, and at any rate all the more worthy of circumvention. But they were there beyond doubt, which was all that matters; and as my rod was now in its case, I sat and marvelled at the fact. I thought of all my friends and acquaintances, who would regard a stream like this as "flogged to death" if a couple of rods a day passed once over a mile of it, and of all the carefully limited little fishing syndicates, the restriction of baskets—not as foolishness, of course, but as food for reflection. I recalled some waters, too, where the fish have run to seed, or, in other words, to numbers and insignificance, from want of thinning. I thought of Association waters familiar to me, miles of lusty fertile stream which, except at holiday seasons, you may have almost to yourself, and the chronic outcry of "over-fishing" that goes up from most of them. It

was cheering, therefore, to come back to these Berwickshire rivers, subjected as they are to conditions almost unthinkable to Englishmen in physically similar regions, and find them full of fish, whereas by rights they ought to have been emptied long ago.

I was thinking of all these things, so naturally suggested by the situation, and how strange it looked, and at the same time how in a manner good it was to see these humble disciples of old Isaac enjoying themselves, along the park edge of a country house and in sight of its windows, and everybody looking on it as quite a natural thing. For work hours were over on farm, mill, smithy, or school, and three or four fishermen had dropped, as it were, from the clouds upon my seclusion and were busy at work. The Border angler is essentially a sportsman, though far too much addicted to the worm in good fly-fishing weather. Otherwise he will not take trout by foul and nefarious means, such as nets, or line, or dynamite, and, valuing his privileges, will, so far as he can, prevent others from doing it. When occasional rascality of this kind goes forward in this country—a crime against society in general—it is the work of miners from the Mid-Lothian or Lanarkshire collieries. The Merse peasant is as reserved an individual as is anywhere made. Like the Northumbrian, he has no road manners at all. "Good morning" or "good evening" do not exist in his vocabulary. These world-wide greetings sound in his ears as the sound of gibberish. But this is not his fault. To a passing remark that the day seems taking up, or if it is raining that it is a bit soft, he may only grunt an accord if he doesn't know you, but he will at least grasp what you are driving at.

But meet him on the river bank within the bond of angling freemasonry and he is generally another man,

voluble and eloquent upon the sport that he loves. "You seem to have plenty of fish left here," I remarked to one of these newcomers who was putting his rod up as I strolled along the bank, homeward bound. "Eh! there's plenty fish, and some gran' yins tae," and then the flood-gates were let loose. I learned how "yon stream abune the bridge," now in this July day a thin, shallow, unfishable slide under a line of alders, had provided my friend one evening in the merrier and fuller month of May with seven or eight fish in quick succession, weighing, I am afraid to say how much—having regard, I mean, to the average of the river. But I am sure he was speaking the approximate truth. I learned, too, that he was a life-long enthusiast, and had won no end of competitions—a form of entertainment that the Border trout-fisher of all classes loves, and that southern anglers for trout generally abhor. I was informed that his brother had won the gold medal (I think it was gold) of a club in Edinburgh, the name of which I was evidently expected to know, several times in succession. For the fishing clubs of the metropolis hold their competitions on the various open waters of the Border counties, just as the golf clubs of Edinburgh celebrate theirs on the many open links. I was also told the precise weight of the baskets which had achieved these various triumphs, and where they were made, and I am quite sure the figures were approximately correct. His rod, like most of those still wielded by these simple skilful souls, was a fearsome weapon—long, wobbly, and top-heavy, of the kind which brings back the days of one's youth before the economics of comfort and efficiency were duly studied. But the humbler Scotsman is nothing if not conservative. Even his political Radicalism, any one will tell you who can afford to say what he thinks, is due much more to that

inherent instinct than to the political acumen which is flourished by his allies, and no doubt in quite good faith, on southern election platforms.

"Ye're gangin awa' jest aboot the time ye oucht to be start'n," said this fervent disciple of Stewart, and Stoddart, and Henderson (not the Chirnside worthy)—the last two, charming writers of riverside prose and verse—as I wished him good sport, and bid him adieu. This was quite true. For that witching hour of sunset and gloaming even into darkness, which in the summer months draws out the trout fishermen, was at hand—a period which it may incidentally be remarked the north country angler constantly prolongs to the hour of sunrise.

As a little later I crossed the high-swung foot-bridge, the sun had sunk below the hill and the after-glow was shimmering on the broad shallows; while away beyond them, in the grey shadow of the woods, I could see the form of my late entertainer already at work in mid-stream. Rooks in great flocks were swinging homeward over the quiet vale to some abode, no doubt, of ancient fame in the Merse, and restless cushats, lusty and fat from their depredations among young turnips or grain-fields, were winging to some temporary roost their solitary way, while downwards the river vanished under red screes into the darkling woods of Edrom and Blanerne.

The Whiteadder has no place in that garland of notable verse, ancient and modern, which has made Yarrow, Teviot, Leader, and some other tributaries of Tweed household words, though many of the seventy Berwickshire bards whose selected remains have been collected into a single volume have naturally apostrophised it. Perhaps its otherwise significant and euphonious name is a trifle unhandy for metrical pur-

poses. Again, it is far out of the old beat of the chief Scottish singers, and was probably as unknown to the earlier as it certainly has been to the later ones. This literary oblivion is assuredly due neither to lack of charm nor of stimulating association, with both of which this final tributary of Tweed is lavishly endowed. And the Whiteadder may assuredly share with her sister streams in Stoddart's invocation to the great river which gathers them all into her bosom :—

> "Let ither anglers choose their ain,
> An' ither waters tak' the lead.
> O' Hielan streams we covet nane,
> But gi'e to us the bonnie Tweed,
> And gi'e to us the cheerfu' burn
> That steals into its valley fair,
> The streamlets that at ilka turn
> Sae safely meet and mingle there."

CHAPTER VII

TWO MERSE TOWNS

Edrom is on the right bank of the Whiteadder, not far below the pleasant spot where daylight fell on our discursive saunterings in the last chapter. It is also about half-way between Chirnside and Duns, and one might add without offence, is the only point in the five-mile journey that would give pause to any wayfarer other than that imaginary rural economist on the prowl, whom we have agreed would in July, between hay and harvest, be at Scarborough or in the Engadine. Edrom boasts of an old church of some importance, originally Norman, with little left in it, however, of any pre-Reformation work. Two buttresses containing image niches survive of an aisle erected by Robert Blackadder, Bishop of Glasgow, a Berwickshire man, with the fact and the date, 1499, inscribed thereon; while a fine Norman arch guarding the entrance to a family vault is all there is left of the original church. To anyone accustomed to the virtually intact mediæval churches which confront one at every two or three miles in some southern counties, the very notice of such mere fragments as this may seem superfluous. But as English hands gutted all these churches and left the Scotch Reformers but small opportunities to show what they might or might not have done in that sphere of action, there is cause rather for abasement than for complacency in an Englishman when he notes the nakedness of the land.

The interest of Edrom lies rather in the fact of its being the Valhalla of so many famous Border families: not the building itself—save, I think, for a vault of the Blackadders under the wall—for after the Scottish fashion these family burial-places and vaults are distributed about the churchyard. One liberal allotment is sacred to the Buchans of Killoe, another to the Campbell-Swyntons of Kermigham. Near the church there is a

Near Edrom.

long, low building, one-half of which is the mausoleum of the Logans of Broome, the other of the Logan-Humes of Edrom. It is a wide-spreading kirkyard, fair and green to look upon, with no adjacent village to speak of, and shut off by bordering groves from the Whiteadder, which sings below. The grouping and fashion of these tombs of the mighty of the parish are characteristic of the north side of Tweed; while the long, open sheds near the kirk, for horses and traps, are essentially of the soil. I should be a bold individual did I attempt any serious

excursion into the mystic labyrinth of Border family history. But these Blackadders touch a slightly variant note in nomenclature, as taking their name from the river on which their early lines were cast—that winsome younger sister of the Whiteadder that we shall no doubt meet again later. Blackadder Tower, near the junction of these two streams, still recalls in name the ancient family whose dust lies here at Edrom. They have long ceased to be lairds in the Merse, but not by any means to be worthily represented here and elsewhere. An interesting name, and one that if you happen to have started life with a fortuitous acquaintance of this most absolutely Mersian of all the Berwickshire rivers, for it alone begins and ends in the county, will catch the ear in any clime.

Edrom, as a considerable burying-place, has had, like other churchyards in the Merse, some gruesome experiences during that active period of body-snatching associated with the infamous names of Burke and Hare. A local friend, who is a complete mine of Berwickshire lore, related to me the particulars of a "resurrection" exploit, and its termination, which, as it concerned Edrom, will be in order here. He had it from his father, who was a student in Edinburgh when the two above-mentioned villains and others less known to fame were in an active way of business, and was a minister in this neighbourhood during the period when churchyards had to be regularly watched for many nights after every funeral. In the year 1828 a well-known farmer, who had been "keeping it up" after Berwick market in the convivial fashion of the time, was riding home in the moonlight upon the road between Edrom and Duns. Soon after passing the first-named he espied ahead of him a gig or spring cart with three people upon the front seat. Jogging along not far

behind it his attention became drawn to the rigidity of the central figure, as compared to the flexible attitude of its neighbours, who were conversing across it. Suspicion was naturally in the air in these days, and pressing closer up he was able to make out that the man in the middle was dressed in a reefer jacket, and wore a cloth cap pulled down over his eyes. His attitude, however, gave rise to still stronger suspicions, which quickened yet more when the driver whipped up his horse and went away at a smart pace.

The farmer now determined to see the matter out, and stuck close to the trap, whose driver then practically gave his case away by putting his horse into a gallop. The other being well mounted gave chase, and a hot race ensued along the moonlit road to Duns. The saddle, however, in time asserted its superiority over the shafts, and at a point where the road skirted a deep wood the pursuer saw the trap in front of him suddenly pull up, two of the men jump out of it, and with a parting cut at the horse, which galloped on, disappear among the trees. Continuing the pursuit, the farmer soon came up with the horse, and succeeded in seizing it by the bridle and bringing it to a stop. The reins all this time had been dragging on the ground, and on interviewing the undemonstrative occupant of the gig, he found, as he expected, a corpse fastened to the seat in an upright position. So taking charge of his prize he led it on into Duns, and handed it over to the police. The body turned out to be that of an old man buried at Edrom two or three days previously. Feeling in Duns was greatly wrought up over the incident, and the body was reburied there, not in its desecrated grave at Edrom. The horse was put out at livery till it had eaten up its value, and then became the possession of the stable, for it may be well

imagined no one claimed it. The gig was publicly burned in the market-place. Descendants of the twice-

The Blackadder near Kelloe.

buried corpse, and those of the farmer who so opportunely rescued it from desecration, are alive and hearty in the Merse to-day.

A local tradition of a less authoritative nature

than this one tells how a humorous and resourceful person got possession of a horse and cart by inspired strategy from some resurrectionists and neither burned the cart nor put the horse out at livery to eat up its value. In this case two men in the front seat of a vehicle were seen one night by the genius in question to leave it in the road, with apparently a third party on the back seat, and repair to a lonely public-house for some refreshment. Biding his time, our friend, having satisfied his suspicions that the back passenger was no longer of this world, and obviously not being himself troubled with nerves, unfastened him, deposited him in the ditch, and, assuming the corpse's overgear, took its place. In the meantime the fortified resurrectionists returned to their charge and resumed their grim and risky journey towards Edinburgh—seated as before, with their backs against that of the supposed corpse. In time uncanny feelings vaguely crept over them. One swore the back passenger pressed warm against him; the other, outwardly scouting his companion's tremor, began to lose nerve under the horrible suggestion. The corpse's substitute in the meantime contrived such subtle movements as to increase the growing terrors of the guilty pair, and unstring their nerves without giving any definite sign of life. When by their conversation he judged them to be sufficiently under the influence of fear, night, and superstition, he heaved a deep groan and gave a push with his back about which there could be no possible mistake. Uttering, says the chronicler, a wild cry of "Man! it's alive," the pair jumped out and fled into the darkness, while the corpse drove the horse and trap home for better uses.

Duns is the present capital of Berwickshire, having ousted Greenlaw from that honourable situation within

recent times. This was only a return, however, to its situation in the seventeenth century. It has only quite lately, after six or seven hundred years, come to a firm decision about the spelling and pronunciation of its own name. In ancient times it was Duns, so far at least as spelling counted for anything. In my youth it seemed to have settled down finally into Dunse; and it was something of a shock to come back and find a historic place wearing an almost unfamiliar name, for the final "e" makes all the difference in pronunciation. But it is surely a good move to revert to a form so closely associated with the nation's history. Sometimes, too, in the wild phonetic days it was spelled Dunce, and it may probably have been the peril of some loose return to this that brought about the present settlement.

The town rises pleasantly upon a low ridge, richly garnished with the fine timber of the Merse, and banks ablaze with that peculiar radiancy of colouring that only clean and lusty crops give to a tillage country. Above the town spring the woody and pastoral slopes of its historic Law. Behind all, and now but two or three miles away, are the long sweep of the Lammermoors. A clean, rather hard-faced, but not uncheerful little town this, of some 3000 souls, with a spacious market square presided over by an imposing town-hall of most ecclesiastical complexion. At first sight of its Gothic front, its pointed door and windows, its crocketted buttresses and lofty battlemented and pinnacled clock tower, you would hail it without hesitation as the parish church, particularly being in Scotland, where church architecture is apt to be disconcerting. In this case, assuredly the most conspicuous building in Duns is at the first approach much more eloquent of preacher than of Provost. Duns Scotus, the eminent

fourteenth-century schoolman, is accepted as the first of the local worthies. A portrait of him, or rather an artistic conception of what he might possibly have been, after the manner of the well-known Holyrood galaxy of Scottish kings, hangs in the town-hall. The parish of Embleton, in Northumberland, however, also claims him, and cherishes the site of a farmhouse named Proctor Steads, formerly Dunstan Tower, as his abode. It supports this claim by its association with Merton College, of which ancient foundation the subject of this rivalry seems to have been a member. The county buildings are modest compared to the town-hall, and situated in a less conspicuous quarter. The corn exchange was once a great commercial mart, but nowadays, so completely have the "Auld Enemies" buried the hatchet both of war and its long-surviving prejudices, that much of the trade and traffic of the Scottish county goes to English Berwick, on the main artery of business. But Duns has obviously survived such shocks as well as any little town, and being on the only railroad traversing the county, with a huge sheep country behind it and a fat grain country in front, and a county council to cheer it up, looks entirely happy in spite of its resounding paved streets, on which three crawling farm carts will make the town rattle as if in the throes of a big thunderstorm. Its proud motto is "Duns dings a'."

Thomas Boston, author of the *Fourfold State of Man*, and of memoirs freely used by modern writers on Scottish history, was a native of Duns. He was minister in Ettrick in the early part of the eighteenth century, and of the hard cheerless Calvinism of his day was a fanatical and uncompromising exponent. His memoirs, as exhibiting that point of view, and merely as a means of introduction to the spirit of his time, have a certain grim fascination. Dr. McCrie, the

historian and the upholder in his many works, which include a life of Knox, of the theocratic principles and dogmas of which his fellow-townsman a century before had been such an extreme supporter, was born here. McCrie was a seceding minister, but his works had a great vogue. He was a contemporary of Sir Walter's, and among the many who felt and resented with his pen the new light upon a fanatical past so genially shed by that master hand. I admit without blushing that my own acquaintance with the Duns historian is limited to observing the frequency with which he is pilloried in footnotes by some present-day Scottish writers, as an awful example of how history should not be written. The atmosphere of Duns should in truth have been sufficiently favourable to the production of such champions of the Covenant: for is not Duns Law the most consecrated spot in the whole struggle ?

Whether theocracy was the making of Scotland, or its curse, as some of its most brilliant sons have now the hardihood to hint, Duns Law at any rate witnessed one of its greatest demonstrations. It may or may not be remembered that Charles I., with the fatal indiscretion of his race, made persistent efforts to force Episcopacy upon Scotland, where the Presbyterian development of the Reformation had taken firm hold of the mass of the people. A bishop, to the Scotsman of that period, had literally horns and a tail. The mere holding of such an office was absolutely the quickest passport to that inferno which the more truculent elect of the day positively revelled in realistically visualising for the benefit of a foredoomed majority of their neighbours. Charles, however, encouraged no doubt by an Episcopalian minority, could not, or would not grasp the situation. He conceived himself, too, as ordained of God head of

the Church as he was of the realm of Scotland. He was not more astray than the Scottish Presbyterian leaders in their ignorance of the English nature and their almost pathetic hope that the English people would bend to the inquisitorial yoke of a gloomy quasi-democratic theocracy. We all know how a brief experiment of Puritan rule, not approaching the Scottish form in vexatious restraint, was flung off by the English like a nightmare with one shout of relief. Whatever the lies, shifts, and double-dealings of Charles, both before and during his troubles, he behaved like a man and a gentleman in refusing to save himself and perhaps his fortunes by taking the Covenant. He was incapable of doing this like his outrageous son, with his tongue in his cheek. His conscience here, at least, when he had no other hope, stood firm. But this didn't excuse his foolish attempts to coerce Scotsmen, who really liked their homemade form of Calvinism with all its gloom and hell-fire, and honestly believed themselves to be a chosen people, literal successors of those who wandered out of Egypt. If most of this enthusiasm came from the middle and lower ranks, and if the tail did in a measure wag the head upon Duns Law, when Charles was waiting with his army to cross the Tweed, the nobility and gentry of Scotland were out for the Kirk in greater force and with more enthusiasm than on any occasion before or afterwards. Over 30,000 men were camped on the Law, each regiment under its territorial lord, and all commanded by the crooked little old soldier Leslie. Thousands were either taking the oath of the Covenant for the first time or renewing it with much fervour upon an old block of stone that still lies upon the summit of the hill. The preachers were in high feather. It was a great triumph to see so many of the noblest of the land, who in general, with

their complex interests, were anything but united and whole-hearted in this business, all solid for the cause. The Rev. Robert Baillie was there, mounted and armed, but more helpful with his tongue, which he wagged to some purpose, and yet more with his pen so far as posterity is concerned. Charles was watching all this from the high south bank of Tweed opposite Paxton, and had about 16,000 men with him. Forty cannon frowned from the slopes of Duns Law, and the hardy souls who served them would have blown a bishop from each muzzle with grim joy.

But even military enthusiasm and pulpit eloquence cannot flourish without provisions, and it was just as well that Charles proposed an adjournment of both parties, by representatives, to Berwick and a more amicable settlement. But this army of the Covenant clustering on Duns Law in successful defence as it proved of the national form of faith is something of a bloodless Bannockburn to the true Presbyterian heart.

Duns had been gutted so ruthlessly in the English raids of the sixteenth century, that the town was built anew on the present site, a little lower than the ancient one. The last of the great Border raids to be led by a Percy was discomfited here not long before Flodden by the cunning of the locals, as there seems to have been no opposing force at hand. For when the camp was asleep and the horses of the English cavalry tethered on the pasture, a large body of peasants rushed down waving the rattles, composed of a bladder containing pebbles tied to the end of a stick, which they used for scaring the deer and cattle of the Lammermoors, from their grain crops. At the hideous noise a wild stampede took place among the horses in the darkness, and all further progress of Percy and his army put an end to.

Duns Castle, a seat of one branch of the Hay family, stands near the Law and above the town amid a wealth of undulating wood and park-land, a comparatively modern house upon an ancient site. In the grounds is a sheet of water known as the Hen poo', the great gathering place of Berwickshire curlers. Duns Law is a place of pious pilgrimage to many lowland Scotsmen, for the historic significance attached to it; while the block of stone, now carefully protected, on which the Covenant, as related, was taken or renewed by so many zealous patriots in 1639, gives that tangible objective

Duns.

point to the trip which the more slenderly equipped tourist likes to have. The view over the Merse is a fine one and much spoken of. But it is nothing to the superb outlook which rewards the more adventurous traveller who has sufficient energy to follow the high-road over the Lammermoors for a steady upward drag of three miles.

Here, upon Hardens Hill, after trailing between fine avenues of beech and ash, and mounting higher into windswept pine woods, the road sweeps out at last into the glorious heaths of Lammermoor. A half hour upon the brow of this high rampart comes vividly back to me. It was a July noon, beneath a clear sunny sky with the gentlest and balmiest of south-

west breezes wafting on its wings the mingled fragrancy of moorland and pine wood. A dry bank of sward was handy for the greater enjoyment of a glorious scene. The drubbing wings and vocal plaints of restless peewits close overhead, the song of rejoicing larks in the air far above them, and the call of distant curlews mingled with the faint bleat of sheep. And this was no mountain top, but only the apex of an excellent though but lightly travelled highway that leads into the heart of the wilds—otherwise to the little village of Longformacus, the "capital of the Lammermoors." These edges of great moorlands, which open wide upon the one hand into sweeps of solitude, and on the other over vast distances where rural life is thickly humming, are seats for the gods. The heather was just touching with its first faint flush the folding hills that heaved away towards a far horizon which looked down upon East Lothian. Below, the Merse glimmered far and wide with its red fields, its yellowing cornfields, and mantling woods, its glint of village church spire or country seat. Beyond the line of Tweed spread the fainter but yet clear-cut hills and valleys of Northumberland. I could follow up the windings of the Till from Flodden and Ford Castle to Wooler, and from Wooler to the woody spur beneath which the wild cattle of Chillingham have their immemorial range. The Cheviots rolled their billowy crests from the "Muckle Cheevit," looming large and near upon the Border line, to fade remotely into the more rugged heights that embosom Rothbury and the upper waters of the Coquet.

But enough of Northumbrian detail. It is in the westward outlook that Hardens Hill more particularly excels, if Cockburn Law and some other points on the brink of the Eastern Lammermoors open

out the sea-coast to better purpose. For westward one can follow the Lammermoors to their remote shadowy limits, where thirty miles away they mingle with the misty hills of Selkirk, Peebles, and the country of the Upper Tweed. The triple-crested Eildons, the heart of the Scott country, and the long chain of sentinel heights guarding Lauderdale, seem by comparison close at hand. From here, too, I got the first glance, and an intimate one, of a strip of country that was new to me—for my early wanderings among the Lammermoors had not extended quite so far west—and it savoured also of the unexpected. Now the south-eastern part of the Lammermoors drop more or less abruptly down into the Merse. But from Hardens Hill, which is something of a flanker, you can rake their skirts westward with the eye away to the Westruther and Spottiswoode country near to Lauderdale, a rather sad-looking, broad, level step as it were between Merse and moor, neither one nor the other, sparsely planted and thinly peopled. It appeared to stretch for miles and miles along the foot of the moors—one vast moss, no doubt, in former days, and seeming to tell to-day a tale of but partial conquest in its unfenced spaciousness, broken only by belts of fir trees, and bearing but intermittent traces of that relentless lowland plough which drives so high up into the wild, if there is anything to be made on it. There was character obviously in this long stretch of smooth-lying, sad-looking, but half-tamed country, for its very loneliness. Curiosity impelled me to traverse it a little later, which I did from Westruther by a road that began well, but running about as straight as an arrow, with scarcely a rise, ultimately obscured itself beneath a thick coating of turf. For a farming country it proved as lonely as it looked from this height of Hardens that so finely flanks

it. Three or four homesteads, each handling, no doubt, great areas of the thin moorish land, made up its human element. Breadths of flat, unconquered heathland here and there even yet told the tale of its material, while an ancient pele tower told another of its social, past. The ramparts of the Lammermoors, then in all their purple glory, looked down upon the scene, and finally a terrific thunderstorm, with no refuge from its fury, sent me drenched into the last farmhouse on the waste, a proceeding that might, under the circumstances, seem belated to any one who was indifferent to the amenities of fork-lightning at extremely close quarters upon an open road. Looking down once more from Hardens Hill, a tapering church spire springing high above a mass of foliage to the west of Duns marks at once the seat of the former Earls of Marchmont and the picturesque and historically notorious church and village of Polwarth. It is on the road to Greenlaw, which I propose to glance at in this chapter. Here is a village celebrated in the rustic lore of the Merse and immortalised by two poets, if a ballad of Allan Ramsay's, recast by Leyden, may stand for the double honour :—

> "At Polwarth on the Green,
> If you'll meet me in the morn,
> Where lasses do convene
> To dance around the thorn—
> A kindly welcome you shall meet,
> Frae ane that likes to view
> A lover and a lad complete,
> That lad and lover you."

The uninitiated in his armchair may think I am trifling with him in quoting these artless lines. But they are hallowed in the first place by their authorship, in the second by the familiarity they enjoy in a country whose

tale lives so much in song, and above all they commemorate a bygone custom for which most of us have a soft place. For what is left of an ancient thorn still stands on Polwarth Green protected by a railing. And this is the identical tree around which the less sophisticated forbears of the present lads and lasses of Polwarth danced in their youth. If the thorn and its associations, which might easily be so, were situated in a Surrey village, there would be a revival under the distinguished patronage of a narrow acred, sumptuously housed squire, not very long, perhaps, from Manchester or Glasgow, or with an interest in a bigger city still nearer home. Gaily caparisoned children of a pseudo village, accustomed to much more stimulating forms of entertainment and sprung from every stock in the United Kingdom, but united in the common bond of a cockney accent, would caper once a year before a mildly bored and decorative audience a very pretty pastoral play. There would be the three cheers for the squire and his lady, proposed by the schoolmaster, on whom much of the burden had very likely fallen, and everybody would drive away in motors declaring how delightful it was that the lower classes should be thus encouraged to revive the simple, hearty, rural amusements of Merry Old England. But country life in Berwickshire and the north is not the least like that within the orbit of London, and, indeed, differs no little in many ways, chiefly social, from that of a genuine English countryside. I may be wrong, but I fancy it would take very strong inducements to make the yokels of the Merse dance around the thorn on Polwarth Green to-day. A stranger meeting a troop of " workers " in their quaint primitive attire coming from the field might be excused for imagining that these were just the very people to do so. But if he met these strapping lassies in their

Sunday best he would see at once how utterly he had misjudged them. The dancing on Polwarth Green, however, was particularly associated with weddings, of which it was in former days an indispensable corollary, every married couple being expected to dance round it with their friends. So the time-honoured stanza of invitation from a lad to a lass to dance around the thorn on Polwarth Green had a very direct significance.

But Polwarth has much more in the way of romance than this graceful old tradition to its credit. For the brave heroism of Lady Grizell Baillie, which saved her father's life, is an event that no history of Scotland larger than a text-book would venture to omit. Polwarth church, rebuilt 200 years ago upon a very ancient foundation, stands in the grounds of Marchmont House, which was built in place of an older castle rather later by the last Earl of that name, and is still in the family, though the title has lapsed. Now the first Earl, then Sir Patrick Home of Marchmont, during the troublous, persecuting times of Charles II., was so out of sympathy with the Government, that they sought his life. Driven into concealment, he found it in his own family vault beneath Polwarth church, no one living but his young daughter, Grizell, being in the secret. Hither for a long period the courageous girl in the dark of the night brought her father such food as she could save without observation from the family table, and finally assisted his escape to Holland. From thence at the Revolution of 1688 he returned to be raised to an Earldom. The same young woman, while ministering to the wants of her entombed parent, had also carried a letter from him to Robert Baillie (whose son she married a dozen years later) then lying in prison at Edinburgh under sentence of death. She rode alone to Edinburgh, forty miles, through the night,

passing in the early morning beneath the city gates on which the heads of many of her family's friends were already festering. She contrived to get the letter in and take home the reply to her father. This lady, however, was no mere plucky girl. At the revival of the family fortunes she rejected a pressing offer from William's Queen, Mary, to remain at court as a maid of honour, choosing, as she thought, the better part of a country lady in Scotland. And this she filled with such engaging charm, sweetness, and dignity for nearly sixty years after the Revolution, as the wife of Sir George Baillie of Jerviswood, that she was long remembered. Some songs she wrote as a girl when taking refuge with her relatives in Holland still survive. One of them in the vernacular contains an allusion to the matrimonial atmosphere of Polwarth Green.

Polwarth is half-way between Duns and Greenlaw, the now discarded county town, and the land rises a little in elevation as it declines vastly in fertility. An atmosphere of reclaimed moorland, or rather moss, begins to pervade the atmosphere, which no high-farming can conceal, and, indeed, in large tracts here and there the land has been left virgin, so far as the plough is concerned. Six or seven hundred feet will be the normal elevation of all this western end of the Merse, if Merse it can still be called, which is tilted up and rolls away in breezy spaces till it pitches down into Lauderdale. It is easy to see what this whole country was a hundred or more years ago; and it is interesting to note in what wholesale fashion the big lowland farmers of the past generation have bent this for the most part reluctant soil to their needs. I have beguiled the way at times by trying to picture what this wide-sweeping, poorer Berwickshire country with its great fields, had it fallen to the reclaiming

efforts of Welsh squires and their fifty-acre tenants, would look like.

This is in no sense a reflection upon the latter, for they are an industrious and land-loving people; but as small farmers remotely situated they are inevitably non-progressive. The comparison suggests itself, because just such tracts of moorish country in the counties of Cardigan and Carmarthen, sloping away as these do from the hills, are also more or less reclaimed. But how different custom and tradition affect the landscape of a tract of country in the making. Instead of these great fields geometrically traced by the stone walls that about Greenlaw take the place of hedges, and the large substantial homesteads with their hinds' cottages, standing on ridges far apart, we should have a patchwork of little white- or pink-washed homesteads in clumps of trees, each surrounded by a network of small fields. There would be irregular patches or straggling belts of moor-grass, heath, gorse, or rough pasture that the small man's more diffident plough had flinched from, straggling everywhere in and about. The little streams, too, would claim their ample margins of copse and bracken. There is no question whatever which makes for the picturesque in landscape. But there is something fine after all, if deplorably unæsthetic, in the antitheses of these little farms, and the way in which the lowland Scotsman has treated a refractory country.

There are no half measures, no little corners or odd patches of waste land, no inconsequent straggling thickets of birch or alder, and broom or gorse, which once had a firm grip everywhere. The symmetry is tremendous, even in this wavy, broken, poorish country. The motives were, of course, purely economic ones, according to the bold confident method which distin-

guished the very much reformed Scottish farmer of days that are now getting far away. The country savours greatly of a pious dread of slovenliness, and a pride of appearance at all costs, as if an exaggerated horror of the notorious ways of these forbears had seized upon a very much awakened generation. One feels here that ragged, hopeless acres have been whirled under with the hopeful ones in the long stride of the plough, with no paltry niceties of calculation, to take their chance, and at any rate to have equal treatment and equal share of the good things to come from the lime-kiln, the barnyard, and the manure merchant. If a piece was rejected, it would seem to have been by the hundred acres, and turned to such grazing uses as may be. This roughly indicates at any rate the spirit of this country; and in remembering all this and looking at it in the right way, you will almost admire the great shapely fields, waving in grain or in rippling seas of rye grass, or in clean pasture, up towards the Lammermoors. Beyond Greenlaw it is almost as bare of trees as the Scotland of the Union period, which so astonished travellers for its nakedness. Stiff and angular plantations of fir, which are the æsthetic blot on so much northern scenery, are here of less consequence. Even the moderately old songs of this Borderland were written in a ragged country. They breathe of a rough surface, of flowery fields, of tortuous paths and the most primitive agriculture, of "dowie denes" and "broomy knowes." One cannot avoid the fact that the enterprising Scottish farmer has made a tolerably clean sweep of the furniture which decks the stage on which the Robs and Maggies of the old Border land lived and frisked. The Merse is a country good to look upon in many ways, both material and romantic, but it is not easy to conceive a bunch of skinny ewes being driven

up to milk over its trim pastures. With all the surface changes of Southern England, which perhaps we hardly realise, there has not been any so complete as this in the last two or three hundred years. A Jacobean milkmaid we might imagine to be not greatly out of order in many an old-fashioned Devonshire or Wiltshire foreground. Greenlaw is, in legal phrase, "a burgh or barony," the superior of which is the owner of the estate of Marchmont. The original town was situated on a small hill a mile away, hence the name. It was the property in mediæval times of the Earls of Dunbar, pre-eminent in Berwickshire, from whom are derived the Homes, equally so—the continuity being thus nobly maintained from quite dark ages. Greenlaw is a more than peaceful little place of a thousand or so inhabitants, sitting pleasantly in a shallow vale, through which the Blackadder, a purling moorland stream, pursues its way through glen or meadow. When it is fining down after a flood you will see an angler every fifty yards along its banks, taking more or less toll from its apparently inexhaustible store of trout. Greenlaw is nothing like such a well-built little town as Duns. A single long street, of so unpretentious and negative a character as to disarm criticism, expresses most of it. About midway, however, there is a break, and the startled alien will find himself confronted upon either hand by buildings in their different way of quite noble proportions. Both, however, are calculated to strike a note of melancholy rather than of joy in the heart of the native. The more imposing of the two are the whilom county buildings, a standing reminder of the ravished dignities of the town, and the grievance which the freemen of Greenlaw, if they are merely human, must still cherish in their hearts. Opposite to this is a great hotel of Georgian aspect,

the despondent-looking victim, not merely of diverted official patronage, but of a much older story—to wit, the disappearance of the coaches. The larger of these two buildings is described by a responsible writer soon after it was built at the cost of the then laird of Marchmont, nearly a hundred years ago, as "a noble edifice of Grecian architecture and chaste design." There is an imposing classic portico extending along the front, surmounted by a dome which appears to have been made fire-proof for the express purpose of safeguarding the county records—and now they are all at Duns! The other building is described with almost equal enthusiasm by the same hand, as then in course of construction, with a fair promise of being one of the finest hotels between London and Edinburgh. For Greenlaw was then on one of the main international coach roads.

The occasion of the visit to Greenlaw now particularly in mind was a lovely day of sunshine in the July of the past year. My only previous one had been made two years before, when a June pilgrimage through the heart of the Merse from Hutton in a dense mist had terminated at Greenlaw in drenching rain—a catastrophe which virtually wiped out, so far as I was concerned, all details of the little town with its startling architectural contrasts, its present and its departed glories. So even still unacquainted with its resources, and inquiring of a friendly tradesman for a suitable house of entertainment for the modest noonday needs of a rather travel-stained wayfarer, he directed me without a moment's hesitation to the palatial-looking hostelry, which I then for the first time knowingly encountered. The first glance was enough; perhaps it was not a very searching one. But it seemed the precise kind of establishment I abhor upon an

occasion of this sort, and altogether suggestive of a melancholy, gilt-mirrored, antimacassared coffee-room, haunted at intervals by a depressed waiter in a white tie. So I retired to my friend and demanded something more snug and cordial-looking. If he didn't quite grasp my needs he did my objections with great perspicacity, and expressed them to a nicety: "Well, there's nae other I could just recommend;" and with that touch of humour the occasion demanded, "ye won't find the —— Arms quite sae intimidatin' as you might think." Intimidatin'! this was splendid, and exactly expressed my feelings. So I returned, and mounting many steps passed through the portals into great corridors and empty halls which recalled Macaulay's rolling periods on the splendid hostelries of the great north road in the coaching period. There was no sign of habitation, however, till a cast or two round the end of a long corridor revealed a secluded bar, presided over by a kindly but humble female, who expressed her ability to provide me with bread and cheese. I was shown into a comparatively small and bare apartment, of stately elevation and corniced ceilings, and altogether eloquent of departed glories. Two or three portraits of long-deceased county magnates hung upon the walls, and such scant furniture as there was looked as if they themselves might once have sat upon it. The bread and cheese appeared in due course—a slice of either upon a plate, with a knife, brought in by a little girl of rustic and unsophisticated habit.

The Ettrick Shepherd would, I think, have been safe here, if one may recall his dread of what in his day must have been a much more "untimeous" meal, as seen through the medium of Christopher North. "I daurna trust myself wi' a luncheon: in my

hands it becomes an untimeous dinner. Whenever I'm betrayed into a luncheon I mak' off wi' a jug or twa just as gin it had been a regular dinner wi' a tablecloth. 'Beware of the tray.'"

There was certainly nothing intimidatin' in the sense my friend the stationer had used the word, though the prospect of sleeping a night alone in these echoing halls might well have justified the epithet. Mine hostess showed me over this mute skeleton of vanished coaching and county glories. It was at least cheering to note that one vast saloon showed signs of occasional festivities.

Though "Duns dings a'," the discomfited Greenlaw does not look in the least depressed, but only tranquil, and, indeed, wears a cheerful mien. It has, no doubt, outlived ambition, and long ago learned to cut its coat according to the measure of its cloth. It has its fairs and markets, too, and lots of trout-fishing at its doors. Much more than this, like a few other old boroughs in this country, its freemen have the pasturage over a thousand or more acres. Every morning the town herd collects the cows, and drives them up to this immemorial expanse of ragged, moorish pasture a mile or so beyond the town, and every evening drives them home again to scatter to their various lodgings and byres. I traversed the town moor one day, in walking from Greenlaw to Hume Castle, which lies some three or four miles to the southward; a really primitive bit of the old wild country that might well make a stage for any of those old ditties that tell of the loves and humours of a peasantry who have ceased to exist, as everywhere else. Clean nibbled sward was here, and tousely moor-grass, yellow with tansy and ragwort; wet green rushy hollows, fragrant with meadow-sweet and patches of broom, or gorse, or heather, and

unmolested thistles. Companies of stunted thorns straggled about the wide-spreading upland, whose choice bites were, no doubt, an open book to the veterans of the town herd. I found their guardian, a man of many years, sitting by the roadside, and only too ready for a crack. He was reading a newspaper, and admitted that when this daily performance was concluded he found time hang heavy on his hands. He had none of the Scottish classics, theological or secular, either in his pocket, or apparently at command, not even a Burns, and obviously was not a man of culture. He "didna tak' much heed to Burns," he said. But he told me all about the time-honoured rules and regulations affecting the grazing rights of the moor. There was no shelter on this whole stretch of it but the afore-mentioned stunted thorns and the like, and I asked him how he did in heavy storms. He replied he didn't do at all well, but fared on such occasions "jes' the same as ilka ane o' yon beasties." Then he waxed eloquent on the thunderstorms he had braved, and the lightning flashes he had narrowly escaped. There had, in fact, been a severe one the day before: hence his eloquence.

The railway from Greenlaw to Gordon, the next station, runs nearly all the way through moorland, ablaze now with heather, or through wide, tawny moors, where little natural sykes or straight-furrowed draining ditches trace black lines through the poor grey-green grasses.

The sudden contrast from the opulent Merse scenery —sudden, that is to say, in a railway train—is almost more striking than if the quick change had been into mountains. With an imperceptible rise you pass from a country far more productive, as luxuriant, and as stately in parks and mansions as Warwickshire, into the

land of the curlew and the snipe. But this is the charm of a Border country, whether of Scotland or of Wales. In Kent or Warwickshire it is a beautiful garden always, if that satisfies. But you feel that it continues so to be, from horizon to horizon; there is nothing beyond. The racy, the romantic, the mysterious are not in that world. To enjoy it in perpetuity you must pluck all such things from your mind and settle down to a standard of ornate limitations. And a man must be bred to this, or at least not to the other sort, to feel a perfect satisfaction. If this is the case, he will see nothing lacking, however susceptible to the influence of nature, nor understand the restiveness that comes of another temperament and standpoint.

Gordon is a small village with fine old timber about it—a detail superfluous to mention in the Merse, but significant here. Rolling away from it in great waving sweeps are the neat farming lands with stone wall enclosures of a reclaimed country. Behind them rises the wild upland of the Lammermoors. Hidden away beyond them to the westward lies the romantic dale and tributary glens of the Leader, to which, I hope, in due course to introduce the reader.

Gordon would hardly claim our notice here but for the fact that the parish was the original seat of the founders of the famous Aberdeenshire clan. Most people, I take it, who have any sense at all of British ethnology, know that the Gordons are of Anglo-Norman, not of Celtic origin—a fact less out of harmony with ordinary tradition when one remembers that the great Aberdeenshire clan, to a far greater extent, I believe, than any others, included a large low-country element. The Gordons are said to have first settled here in the twelfth century, and seemed to have removed to Aberdeenshire two centuries later. Just to the north of the village a

mound still known as the castle, which was only destroyed about 1580, marks the site of their stronghold. Curiously enough, the name of Huntly was borne till a century ago by a hamlet in the parish, now vanished, and was, no doubt, carried with them to the north to become eventually so famous as the distinguishing mark of the head of the clan.

But there is here a more tangible link with the past, if not of quite so distinguished a flavour as that attaching to the mere soil where grew the seedling which, transplanted to a northern clime, grew into so vast a tree. For near the railroad, a short mile beyond the little station, and standing on a green knowe, with obvious traces of an encircling moss, is a pele tower. It is fairly perfect, and blinks picturesquely out of a scattered grove of ash and oaks. This belonged to the Pringles, whose fame as a Border family even to this day is so well known in the north as to require no reminder of the fact. But experience has taught one how little one part of this small island knows (genealogically, I mean) of another part. What does a Pringle know, for instance, of a Basset or a Baskerville, who held the Welsh marches from the time of Rufus, and are still seated there? And what does a Basset or a Baskerville know of a Pringle or a Lauder? —nothing at all, in the way here implied, except by accident.

CHAPTER VIII

IN THE HEART OF THE LAMMERMOORS

THE Lammermoors form a long and comparatively narrow range, for a seven- or eight-mile walk would carry you through their untamed portions almost anywhere. Not reckoning the Moorfoot Hills, though, as a matter of fact, their westerly section, they might be regarded as starting from the Soutra Pass at the head of Lauderdale. Thence you might walk for thirty miles eastward, along the higher ridges, among heather and peat bogs, grouse and curlew, without crossing a road much better than a cart track or meeting any soul but a shepherd. And all the time, if the day be reasonably clear, you may look over half Scotland upon your left hand, and half the Border upon your right. To be literal, you will see the Ochils and the Grampians upon the north, the whole range of the Cheviots to the south—and a prospect that covers North Britain from the Grampians to the Tyne, is something more than a panoramic spectacle. It will make you think, if you are susceptible to anything more than the form and colouring of the earth's surface, for the same reason that makes the outlook from the top of the Malvern beacon the most inspiring in the southern half of Britain. For there you look from Cader Idris to Stratford-on-Avon, from the rugged part of wild Wales on the one hand, and into the gracious heart of England on the other. But no one save a shepherd ever walks along the top of the Lammermoors.

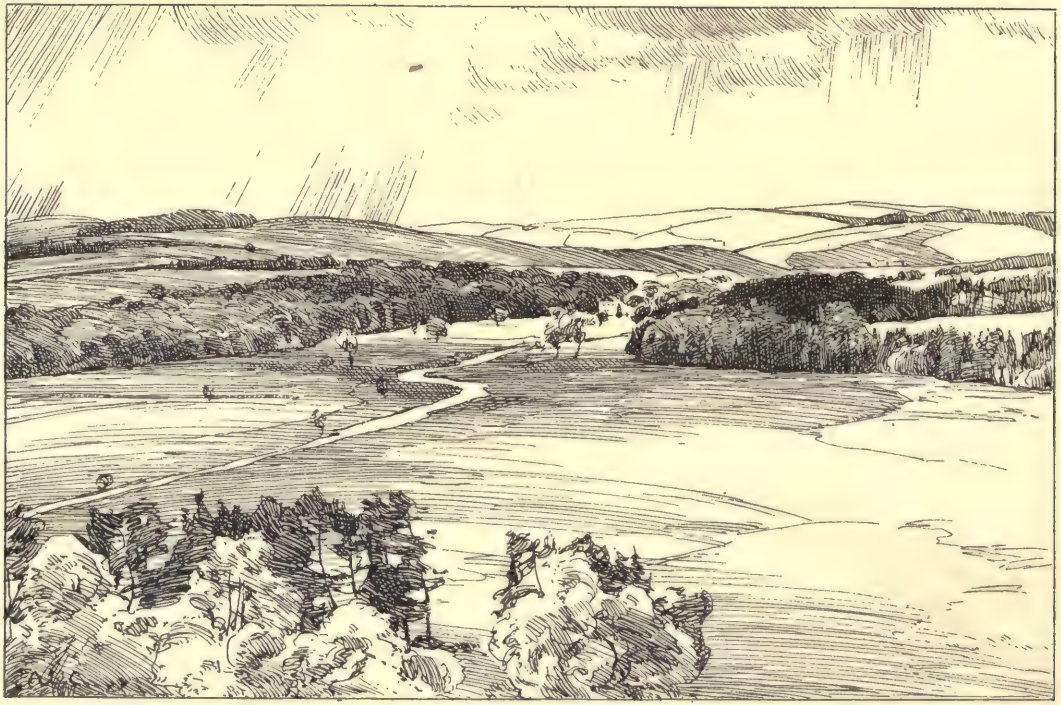
No Highland mountain could approach these modest purple ridges in the significance of their spacious outlook, and of this we have already had so many partial glimpses, further elaboration seems superfluous, and would perhaps be tiresome. Mr. Belloc remarks somewhere that a man sees just so much as he is fit to see, and no more. If a vista of plain and mountain before him appeals solely to his artistic sense, he is obviously incapable of reading any deeper into it, or of responding to any other appeal, and there is nothing more to be said. No undervaluing of the elevating influence of nature unilluminated by anything but its own form and colouring, on the senses is for a moment implied. Yet this is not to "feel" a country, but only its physical surface, which might be occupied by negroes without the least disturbance of the emotions engaged. Happy is the man or woman who can enjoy landscape in its fuller sense, and perhaps they are born, not made. The poetic ingredient is, I take it, indispensable to such a temperament, which is not in the least bit, however, that of all poets, some of whom know no more of this sense than a man born without an ear feels the power of music. Such are some of those who cannot appreciate Scott, though they do not put it so modestly. Of course they cannot. How should they, with the sense that inspired his genius left out of their composition? For Scott of all men who ever wrote in English is the most luminous example of one who "felt" a country, and to whom its surface was not merely beautiful but alive with memories and with voices from the past. With that great master it was not merely a passion for his native Border district or his native country, as wherever he went he seemed to drop at once into terms of intimacy with the local genii. For him, whether it was the Tees, the Greta, the Trossachs, or the Welsh Border,

all the rivers sounded their tales, the woods shook out their secrets.

The Lammermoors are by no means continuous grouse moor or open sheep-run, though you might walk from one end of them to the other over nothing else. The sparse settlements associated with pastoral life have pushed up the narrow valleys, driven the plough here and there along their sides, or laced them with a faint tracery of stone dykes between which large enclosures of improved grasses hang like curtains of vivid green from shaggy canopies of heath or fern. Big homesteads, or at any rate homesteads significant of big things in the way of sheep and acres in the wilds above, stand here and there either on the long winding course of the Whiteadder or on that of the many tortuous burns which feed it. Indeed two or three actual hamlets stand well within the fold of the moors, old abiding places where lairds live or have lived, embowered in woods, with kirk, manse, and schoolhouse, blacksmith, post office, and all such indispensable accessories, always excepting a public-house, of which there is hardly one in this whole thirty miles by ten, to quote rough figures. This will peradventure come as a shock to the southern reader, who still believes his northern neighbours to cherish a picturesque devotion to John Barleycorn. But times have changed. It came as a shock to me, I remember very well, on one occasion, before I had re-explored the Lammermoors, and had reckoned for support in the middle of a long day on a well-remembered modest hostelry. Perhaps temperance reform is not wholly responsible for this idyllic condition. Horseback travellers, as well as hard drinkers, have gone by the board, and roads that merely connect these oases with the Merse have no hereafter that travellers on

wheels much care to face, though one or two trail a rough, little-beaten course over the long heathy solitudes into East Lothian.

Longformacus, which we caught distant sight of in a former chapter from Hardens Hill, is the most important of these oases, and the Dye water, spouting from the moors through the village, lends a very sensible charm to the groves, gardens, and meads of the village, and the laird's demesne, through which it urges its boisterous course, to ripple away for a subsequent two miles among moorish hollows to the Whiteadder. Ellemford, hard by, where the streams meet, is a still more diminutive, and hardly less picturesque centre of life—a mere cluster of dwellings by a modern bridge across what in my youth was the uncertain ford which took its name from a feudal family of whose very name no one but antiquaries now reck anything. Two hundred years ago Ellem was a parish with a little church of its own, the site of which used to be pointed out. It is rare on the Border, and probably anywhere in Scotland, to find places perpetuating the name of a stock that is not merely forgotten, but which in a land of Homes, Swintons, Bertrams, Hepburns, Logans, and the like, has a strange alien ring. But the Ellems were great people in their day, which terminated with the fifteenth century, owning broad domains all through this country. Certainly their blood now runs in the veins of many a Border family, gentle and simple. Curiosity concerning a spot associated with so many days of glorious youth, when place-names vexed my soul no whit, and, carried vividly in the mind through life, incited me to some brief search for the scant record of these shadowy magnates. Their doings would not prove of interest here. How they acquired and lost lands, whom they married, and how vigorously, like the rest, they laid



Longformacus.

about them is all sunk into the night of time. The shepherd never heard their name. It lives only in the notes of the serious antiquary, and every few years, when a visit hither of the county Archæological Society falls due, the members are, doubtless, reminded of an obsolete race to which nothing attaches, even in a land seething with traditions and tenacious of the past, and they go home to forget it, no doubt, before the next day.

Ellemford almost alone retains in its name this mute trace of them. The Whiteadder in broad stony shallows churned up by generations of hard-riding farmers and of Border raiders before them, here sings through rushy flood-tortured flats. A little shooting-box or the like in a grove of sombre fir trees, stands, trees and all, precisely as it stood forty years ago. Where a burn comes prattling down a grassy dene, and beneath oak and ash trees for whom also time seems to have stood still, is the old fishing inn, almost as well known to the craft if not to bards and literary pilgrims in its day as that famous hostelry of Tibby Shiels upon St. Mary's Loch. But that one still flourishes. From this, alas, the sign—a trout, I think, and if not it should have been—had been torn down. It was now obviously a private house. I knocked at the door for the simple reason that I could not help it. For there was really nothing to be said to the damsel who responded. I could not bring myself to feign ignorance of geography I knew so well and inquire my road, and I did not in the least want a glass of water, still less one of milk, which rural hospitality is so prone to press as a substitute, to my constant confounding.

I must have appeared a futile person to the lass upon the threshold. "This used to be an inn," was the only remark I could think of. "Aye, I've heer'd folks tell o't," was her laconic reply, for words aren't

wasted in Berwickshire. So I thanked her for the information, and retiring to a grassy bank over against the house, sat down, lit a pipe, and abandoned myself to the not unqualified pleasures of memory. A labourer passed by smoking a cutty pipe with a wire cover, quite after the old way, and though roadside greetings are not much the fashion in this country I was such a legitimate object of prolonged inspection in that out-of-the-way spot that my friend could hardly avoid some Border equivalent for "good day"—a word, as I have said, non-extant in the local vocabulary. "The wind seems freshnin' a bit." To which exhausting effort I rejoined: "What's come to the old inn?" "Aye, I've heer'd yon hoose was an inn once, and a gey fine yin tae; the gentles used to come there fushin' frae Edinborie an' the like o' that." "Did you ever hear the name of the landlord?" He took his pipe out of his mouth and spat, as if to clear his brain. "I've heer'd tell o' the folks who used to keep it, but I canna jes' ca' their names, but they're a' awa frae here this lang syne." This was a long effort for a Berwickshire ploughman, still far from the more garrulous and reminiscent period of life that comes upon most of us, even those of his taciturn breed. So I let him go to his dinner, and no doubt to tell his wife in one of the cottages on the hill slope above, of his protracted interview with "a speerin' stranger abune the brigg." "Heer'd folks tell of it!" Good heavens!

Now the music of a moorland stream has more of subtle pathos in it than all the chords and airs ever wrung from human lungs or fingers. Poets and musicians pay it conventional tribute, but mighty few of them can approach an understanding of what it means to an old fisherman, who knows its infinite varieties of chord and melody with an intimacy of a thousand day-long

recitations. The shallows of the Whiteadder played in almost painful harmony with the thoughts and memories aroused by the spectacle of this once cheerful hostelry. It seemed almost uncanny that three old friends, not the mere passing comrades of a year or two, who were most associated with the place in my memory, should lie in graves each separated from the other by an ocean, and that I should be sitting once again in this secluded and romantic spot, looking at what the oblivious native has "heard tell was once an inn." But away with melancholy. Let me recall rather, not the troutful days, for they would bore most readers, but the festive evenings in that modest upper chamber whose two windows now blink soberly through bedroom curtains across the narrow glen. "Gentles from Edinburgh!" Gentility was not vastly scrutinised in that snug and simple haven. They were all sorts, and from all places, but mainly decent anglers, and that was enough. Those days were not these, nor thank Heaven were they those of a still earlier generation.

Indeed, Christopher North might have thought the atmosphere almost drouthy, and the company something of laggards at shoving the bottle, while the Ettrick Shepherd would have had the lot under the table, no doubt, without turning a hair. Still every man of them had his toddy, and some of them a good many, and nearly all of them sang songs, northern ditties, racy or sentimental, in the vernacular. In the intervals they told fish stories, which waxed more fearsome as the night advanced. But men can soar as high in piscatorial flights, I have noticed, on soda and milk as any ten-tumbler hero among the ancients.

I forget the name of mine host during the two or three years I frequented at intervals during the spring and summer this primitive hostelry. Probably because

The Old Inn, Ellemford.

neither he nor his wife amounted to anything, the establishment being administered, and its guests firmly but wisely governed, by a spinster relation, a rough honest ruler of men known as Grace. It was she who heaped the eggs and bacon, and fried trout upon the table at breakfast, and selected the carver of the black-faced mutton at supper. It was she who knew exactly what sort of a "piece," or what manner of sandwiches each habitué was accustomed to have "awa' wi' him." It was Grace who greeted the arriving guest, if a familiar, in boisterous and hearty Doric, and delivered and received a few broadsides of banter before he settled down, so to speak, into his proper place. It was she who presented his account to the parting guest, a little scrawl that would make the present-day angler of limited purse reflect with sorrow that he had been born into the world just a generation too late. Yet that was a roaring time too for the producers, as it was no bad one for the consumers, a paradox we leave the butcher and baker and political economist to solve in conclave. Wheat was getting on for sixty shillings a quarter, and other corn to match. A sheep-shearing on the Lammermoors was then a joyful and inspiring function, for in those particular years the best low-country wool touched half-a-crown a pound—say twenty-five shillings instead of six or seven for the fleece of every Leicester or Lincoln sheep! Beasts of all sorts fetched good prices, yet butcher-meat was lower than now, while the butchers also throve.

I don't think young men nowadays walk as they did of old. Duns is the nearest station to Ellemford, some six miles off, a steep and narrow road till it escapes from the Lammermoor through bosky denes sprinkled with birch and rowan with their moist grassy bottoms bright with marigolds, meadow-sweet, and willow-weed.

But Duns on its branch line and the inn cart were of no use to us, coming up from near the seacoast of East Lothian on the far side of the moors. We used to tramp over the hills from Grant's House station, on the main line seven miles away, carrying bare indispensables in knapsacks; for we did not dress for dinner at the Trout Inn! Now, it is surely rare for a man in whose life sport fills a prominent place to keep a brief but accurate record of every day or portion of day thus expended from boyhood till death, which in this case covers a period of thirty years. I doubt if a complete equivalent of this singular MS. volume, written up day by day in a small, atrociously bad hand, which alters nothing from sixteen to nearly fifty, exists anywhere! Not a day, not a casual half-hour in the adjacent stream, nor even an odd wood-pigeon shot in the grounds, nor the most utter blank with foxhounds or harriers is omitted in a record abounding in prolific detail; and this, too, by a man who hated writing but was a most energetic and accomplished sportsman, as well as many other very much more useful things. This curious triumph of method, which includes several days a week hunting for years, with much shooting and fishing in their seasons; this unpretentious record of the outdoor side of a whole lifetime is all comprised in a single thick scrapbook, and was kept systematically without a thought of anything but the owner's personal satisfaction. There is not a single word relating to other than the subject in hand from start to finish, though the writer was a person of abounding humour and intimate practical association with every side of rural life in a country that was never at rest. The book has been for many years in my possession. It relates mainly to its writer's own county in Ireland, where sport was necessarily of the old-fashioned kind, and easy to make daily

notes of. On the flyleaf, in boyish hand, is written, "J. H., Sporting Diary," after the manner of ten thousand youthful good intentions of like sort, but this fat book blossomed into a life-work. It begins with the single-barrelled muzzle-loader on the snipe bog, and the pony period in the hunting field. It closes suddenly thirty years later on the slope of an Irish mountain—significantly to me, for I was there. And that was the end, though there were a dozen more blank pages left, never to be filled. I should not have ventured this dissertation, but that quite early in this unique volume, where the ink is getting faded and yellow, come many of these brief laconic entries relating to Ellemford and the Whiteadder. I can fill in the back-lying facts from memory well enough; while the precise figure of our spoils on each and every occasion would be a wholesome check upon that exuberance of fancy which is supposed to illuminate the reminiscences of the disciple of Isaac. As a matter of fact, however, it was my reference to the seeming greater readiness of everyone to use their legs on every and all occasions—not merely in moments of excitement—which set my thoughts in the direction of this singular *multum in parvo* note-book, this concentrated essence of a whole life's sport. It makes mine ache, though still fairly useful ones, to recall and to read this brief confirmation of the mileages and achievements generally we used to cram into the hours of daylight.

Now otter hunting was only followed in those days by about half-a-dozen packs in all Britain, and was conducted on altogether different and more strenuous principles. Like the fell fox-hunters in Cumberland, the hounds were at the tryst at six or earlier in the morning, not at eleven. There were no lunch hampers, nor carriages, nor ladies, nor any social junketings, as

may perhaps be imagined, seeing the untoward hour at which these merrymakers would have had to abandon their beds and homes. One of the few packs in the North was then owned and hunted by a lean, wiry, six-foot septuagenarian of prodigious vitality, who from his headquarters in Edinburgh harried the otters of the Border counties. In the stillness of the night and the small hours of the dawn his hound van used to crawl over the roads of the Lothians to break at sunrise the solitude of some distant stream, and wake its echoes in the fresh of the morning. Some said the old gentleman slept in the van, others that he walked behind. For he was not given to accepting the hospitalities pressed on a Master of Hounds, and in all things, I fancy, kept himself very much to himself. He was, I believe, a south-country man, and it was vaguely rumoured had been once a parson—if the past tense is strictly permissible in connection with the cloth. But he was given neither to reminiscence nor to theology, nor, according to those who accompanied him for years, to utterances on any subject but hounds and topography, so far as the latter related to the pursuit of otters. But whoever he was, and wherever he slept, he always appeared at the riverside at the early hour he had intimated, and was away to the minute, ready to go all day if necessary, at a pace that was the marvel of all men and the despair of some. There is no occasion for the entries in the journal above mentioned to recall a particular June morning, when about daybreak we left the rest of the company at Ellemford, dreaming no doubt of grey drakes, that succulent insect having just made its appearance on the water, and footed it away to Chirnside, some eight miles distant. Here the old gentleman and his hounds were already on the river, and we followed them for many miles up and for many miles down. Two

successive otters, I note by the journal, defied the old man, and by the time we got back to our mutton, about three o'clock, I see the distance covered set down by the same author at thirty miles. As if this were not enough, we were out again with our rods and up to the Dye water already spoken of as coming down to the Whiteadder from Longformacus. The temptation was great and so was the reward. That evening is far fresher in my memory than is the faded ink which records its mere practical results. It was the first of June, and if there is a day in the year suggestive of its gladdest moment, it is surely that one! Summer is late on the Lammermoors, but it arrived by the calendar on that occasion. Its soft balm was in the air and warm dimpling showers were falling between bursts of glorious sunlight. The fresh-opened leaves glowed richly on the hanging woods, the short moist sward glistened, the broom and the gorse blazed on the lower moorland pastures, through which the stream, just freshened by sharper rains in the high moor about Priestlaw and Cranshaws, curved and swished between its red banks. Those who think the young don't feel these things because they don't talk about them are fools: I sometimes wish I could feel them as keenly as I did at one-and-twenty. The poets—some at least—know better, but they are naturally under suspicion as idealists. My diarist, I know, felt the influence of nature and scenery to his marrow all his life, though not greatly endowed with language for its expression, nor feeling any need for such. All he put down about this June evening, however, was: "Warm showers and sunshine. Fished Dye: killed 32, B. 44; total 76; best fish, 1 lb. 2 oz., 1 lb. 1 oz."

After all, the resuscitating of this remote first of June arose in connection with the doubt whether young men are as ready to face long distances on their feet

even with a desirable object at the end of it, as their immediate predecessors were. Only one answer, I take it, is possible; and I daresay the reasons are tolerably obvious. But the generation before that again were marvels. The father of a friend of mine, whose home was near Duns, when a student at Edinburgh University, used often to walk home on Saturday, a distance of forty miles, and start back on Sunday evening, crossing the Lammermoors in the night, to be back in his place in the lecture-room on Monday morning. In the working classes, again, both men and women habitually walked immense distances to market or religious gatherings. Then with railroads came a falling off in this abnormal pedestrian activity. But in Scotland, as in England, the cycle has done more than anything else to transform the agricultural labourer into almost another type of being, and whether for good or ill, to change his tastes, his habits, and his outlook upon life generally. A man who can spend his evenings ten or fifteen miles away in a distant village or the country town and his week-ends in Edinburgh or Glasgow—and this is no fancy picture—whatever else he may or may not be, he can hardly resemble the clodhopper, which the humorist of the city still hugs and will not part with lightly. That he is as efficient, or at least as intelligently interested a rural worker as his father, is denied wholesale by the only class who can possibly judge of so technical a matter, namely, his employers. But he has at least a more exhilarating life, and the command of an immense amount of exhilarating, radiantly covered literature at a nominal price, whereas his predecessor of bookish tendencies had only the classics grave and gay of the village library—and village libraries are very old institutions in Scotland.

I paid a visit one day to an old lady who had kept a

rural post office in the Lammermoors, practically all her life. She had by now, to be sure, retired in favour of her heirs to a snug parlour behind the shop and office. But if the flesh from age was weak, the spirit was not only willing but prodigiously vigorous. I did not go to talk politics, or discuss the decadence of the age, but to carry the greetings of an old friend of my own in the South who had been bred up in her jurisdiction. For surely the attitude of the rural postmistress towards her clients, particularly those whose correspondence makes for constant official intercourse, and whose position creates other attachments, is unique. I heard, of course, the story (which was contemporary with the ancient history of Ellemford just related) of my friend's youth, her girlhood charms, which, indeed, I can remember, the eligible bachelors to whom she had been mentally allotted by my informant with all the precision of a then middle-aged matron with her finger, so to speak, on the very pulse of the parish. I was then told of the consternation which fell upon it and her, when a young knight from the far south descended like a bolt from the blue, and shattered every cherished anticipation. I was pointed out, too, the very spot in the road where my informant had encountered this particular and happier-fated Bride of Lammermoor, when she first learned the broad fact from her own lips, and so forth, and so forth.

She then passed on to matters of more general interest. Here the old lady exhibited a powerful mind, as well as a tenacious memory and an undeniably eloquent tongue. Though a stranger to her, she regarded me as in some sort a link with the past, for I could touch on certain local names and incidents that had passed out of common memory, and at least offered an exceptional opening for extolling the days of old and the men of

old at the expense of those of to-day. This was the text, and hers was not the mere common wail of the ancient, but as eloquent, powerful, and satirical an arraignment of the weakest points in the armour of her enemy, the modern Radical, within such limits as the old lady's situation admitted of, as I ever heard. Even if I could remember all her wingèd words, and reproduce them in their Doric opulence, it would be idle, for the manner of their delivery was at least equal to the matter, which was supremely good, though hardly of a popular nature. It came straight from the heart and the mind—a good heart, and a fine mind, too, of an old Scottish country woman far above the common order, who had at least the life-long knowledge of one large parish as an equipment. "Free schulin'" was the object of her most scathing invective, and the vigorous logic with which she drove home her views regarding it would have made the most complacent and optimistic educationist think that there might be two sides even to that question in Scotland. "Free schulin' indeed, charity schulin' I ca' it," with the fine roll of the r's, and the prodigious scorn they helped to emphasise. She drew an eloquent picture of the wholesome pride with which the peasantry of former days saved the pennies from their scantier wages for their children's schooling, the contempt which was meted out to the few who shirked their obligations, the independence and the self-respect which it engendered, and greater zest it imparted to the scholars themselves. And then she described how all these sturdy feelings had vanished, and how the bairns were now all "herded into schule at ither folks' expense," and their parents shorn of every particle of their old pride. Her opinion of the product of this, in her eyes, degrading system of "charity," more especially as regards her own sex,

needs no saying. "A parcel of feckless hussies wi' a smatterin' o' useless rubbish in their fulish heads: too fine leddies to go out to service, and not sense nor knowledge enough to keep a puir man's hoose."

It was rather singular that only two or three days after this, what really seemed like a prompt justification of our moorland Cassandra's pessimism should have been encountered in another Lammermoor hamlet but a few miles away. Having a lady in company, and the crucial hour of five overtaking us, there was nothing for it but to knock at the door of the most likely-looking cottage, and sound the goodwife as to the possibilities of providing the inevitable. It will remain for ever a mystery how the ladies lived through the afternoon in the days not very remote. The ill-instructed modern flippantly replies, "Oh, but you dined at five or six in those days." Of course we did nothing of the kind. We dined at seven or very often at half-past seven even in the country, and I know that our wives and daughters would now be in a state of despair long before this! The well-favoured matron who answered my appeal on this urgent occasion did so in characteristic Scottish fashion, to the effect that she thought, perhaps, it might be managed. As a matter of fact, it transpired that she made quite a business of it, and was not backward in her *quid pro quo*. For this was a particularly romantic spot to which people "frae Edinburgh and the like o' that" occasionally found their way in summer time. She was a well-favoured, wholesome, capable-looking matron. And as we sat in the roomy marital chamber, also the living-room, after the fashion of visitors in lairds' houses in the eighteenth century, if we may believe the social historian, while she busied herself on our behalf, the whole atmosphere testified to her housewifely qualities. One never would have

guessed that in one essential nearly concerned with domestic economy she was the complete and perfect fool she proved to be. For in converse with my companion during these preliminaries she mentioned a daughter who spent most of her time with a relative, a hint of whose magnificence was the first discordant note.

"I suppose your daughter is a great help to you when she's at home?" said the lady.

"Oh no, she's nae great help; I dinna expect her to be; she's nae need to be workin'."

"I daresay, though, she is a very good cook?"

"Na, she canna cook; it's nae necessary for her to be daeing thae kind of things."

"Indeed," said the lady, "my daughter is a first-rate cook. But perhaps she is a good needle-woman, and makes her own clothes?"

"Oh no (with quite a toss of the head), she's nae hand wi' her needle; she's nae call to be."

"Dear me," said the lady, "my daughter makes nearly all her own dresses. How does yours, then, occupy her time?" This peasant woman was no whit disconcerted. Complacent in an impenetrable hide of crude, almost unthinkably ignorant vulgarity, I am quite sure she felt a thrill of elation that the daughter of a lady did all these things, while her own, I should imagine, ill-tutored, perilously-situated offspring, "did naething, like a real lady."

"Well! she just enjoys herself. Her relation, ye ken, has *independent means*."

There was an unmistakable note of self-satisfied vanity at being the mother of such an egregiously superfluous and fatuous piece of goods. Very likely the young woman was not such a fool as her mother proudly painted her; but that is neither here nor there. I should like to have turned my eloquent postmistress

for about ten minutes on to this woman, whose own meritorious existence and qualities were a living contradiction to the maggot in her head. She was the wife, too, of a worthy, hard-working man, though not a shepherd. No Lammermoor shepherd, I am sure, would have stood such pernicious nonsense for a moment.

The narrow road crosses the new bridge at Ellemford, and in one direction forces its way southward through woody glens into the Merse; in the other it drags a long, winding course through a tossing sea of heath-clad hills into East Lothian. It is indubitably a road of character—not in the literal sense, for the further half of it is extremely rough, no better, indeed, than was the whole in the days of my youth when I frequently traversed it on horseback by day and occasionally by night, and walked it all more than once. For no one then ventured it on wheels who could do better, nor, I should imagine, do they now. It is a road of character all the same. For little as it seems to be now used, it is the only one that really faces the wild and crosses the long, deep barrier between the Merse and Lothian. It has no recorded history, but it is impossible to follow its lonely course curving along the steep flanks of the hills without feeling what a lot it must have seen, and that it is no common chance hill farmer's road, such as in detail it resembles. As you stand far away upon the coast of East Lothian, and thence run your eye along the northern bank of the Lammermoors, you can mark, if your sight be good, a faint red line pitching straight downwards from the bare heights into the plain. This is the end of it, just above the wooded policies of Nunraw and the village of Garvald. I believe still, as I delighted to fancy when I first encountered it, that this is the pass-road described in the opening lines of the *Bride of Lammermoor*, at the northern end of which, just as the

ancient mansion of Nunraw now stands beneath the hills, so stood in Scott's mind the House of Ravenswood. It keeps close company with the Whiteadder from the streams of Ellemford, so wide that the angler must wade, to compass them effectively, to the very source of the river, where it trickles a peaty burn out of the black mosses.

For three or four miles the old road has had its course shifted somewhat and its once rugged surface obviously relaid: Cranshaws, in the heart of the moors, being, I imagine, responsible for this measure of transformation. A trail of civilisation follows the road up

The Moorland Road.

the narrow valley and the lower hillsides, with a farmplace or two responsible for their enclosures.

Cranshaws boasts a noble pele tower, known as the castle, and in good condition. It is of the usual oblong shape, about twenty feet by forty, and, with the help of some restored battlements, is nearly fifty feet high. It is a fine specimen of a Border keep, and must have looked singularly impressive in this lonely country before the time of the fir plantations that now spread all about the more modern buildings which have always been the home of mighty sheep-farmers. The Bertrams, a name of note in the world of Cheviots and Blackfaces,

were here for a long time. They and the Darlings of Priestlaw, a few miles beyond, occupied with their flocks this entire country to the northern edge of the Lammermoors. A little church and schoolhouse near the river is about all else there is of Cranshaws, while in the churchyard is the burying-ground of the Swintons of Swinton, in the Merse. It might be asked why so famous a family with so fat a patrimony should have brought their dead so far up into these wilds. It seems, however, that for the valour of his father at Otterburn, and also at Homildon, where he got himself killed with such conspicuous éclat, Sir John Swinton the younger of that ilk was given this estate of Cranshaws by Archibald, Earl of Douglas. He went with other Scots to help the French against Henry V., and though he himself fell, it was not till he had won distinction by killing the Earl of Clarence.

> "And Swinton laid the lance
> That tamed of yore the sparkling crest
> Of Clarence's Plantagenet."

At one time Cranshaws belonged to the Hepburns. A neighbouring height is known as Manslaughter Law, and is supposed to preserve in its name the memory of a sanguinary encounter between that spirited East Lothian race and an Earl of Dunbar. From Cranshaws onward for eight or nine miles to the northern brink of the Lammermoor range all is heathery solitude, save for an oasis of enclosures with a large farmhouse set in the angle where the Fasney water coming down from other solitudes further southward joins the Whiteadder. This is Priestlaw, a holding romantic in its remote situation, and of otherwise familiar name in every market and fair from Edinburgh to Berwick. The great extent of its sheepwalks, and the status in the agricultural

world of the family who have occupied it for two or three generations, added something, perhaps, to its notoriety. In my young days Priestlaw was also renowned for its wayside hospitality. With miles of rough solitary moorland road lying upon either side of it, a road traversed fairly often by horsemen or occasionally by two-wheel traps on their way between East Lothian and the Merse, it was a place either to stimulate hospitality till it had become almost a second nature or to turn an unsociable occupant into a recluse. The old gentleman then in possession was renowned for the more genial part, and played it in fine patriarchal fashion. A mere handshaking acquaintance was enough to make it a high misdemeanour to ride past Priestlaw without—well, the inevitable in those days; while if a meal was impending no denial was accepted. The fine trouting, too, about the headwaters of the Whiteadder and the Fasney, still, I daresay, as good as ever, provided yet further scope for the abounding hospitality of this grand old gentleman and his family. I can see him dimly yet, in a dark swallow-tail coat and a high white neckcloth, and a pronounced flavour of what even then was old-world punctilio mixed with his warm and hearty manner.

Standing out in his picturesque and patriarchal hospitality, on the broad canvas of those lonely sheep-walks that shut out the world for miles upon every side, the image of this very perfect type of a great pastoral farmer of a bygone day has remained always with me. In those strenuous hours of youth there was a fly in the ointment from the very warmth of the welcome which in my case was generally concerned with fishing. "Put your horse up? Of course; ride him round to the stable—and *ye'll remember that dinner's at five sharp*" (I think it was five). Now he would have been a bold

man, as well as a deplorably tactless one, who had stabled his horse at Priestlaw and overlooked the corollary, though the fish, as they are apt to in May and June, were coming ever so fast and furiously up on the feed at that witching hour. It was a grievous wrench to perverfid youth, and to whom sitting through a meal in nether garments which had been in and out of the river all day didn't count for anything. After dinner came an equally, nay, a much more serious function, then pretty general, in the shape of the urn, the rummers, the smaller glasses, the silver ladles, and the main essentials. And what whisky you got too in the right places, nay, almost anywhere in Scotland in those days—though it was then, of course, almost unknown in England.

Perhaps it is for this very reason I can recall the flavour of the Scotch whisky of those days with extraordinary clarity, and I am quite sure no one but millionaires ever gets hold of such stuff now. No wonder there were twelve-tumbler men living to a green old age. Soda water did not circulate in Scotland in those days—I mean in private life of the typical kind. Nor were any teetotallers to speak of in circulation either. It seems almost absurd to set down what was once a matter of such every-day habit, that in Scotland the whisky toddy was mixed in a rummer, a round-bottomed tumbler on a stem, and transferred at intervals with a silver ladle into an accompanying wine-glass by way of cooling it sufficiently for consumption. Even young Scotsmen nowadays seem to know nothing of these ancient rites and implements. It fell upon me as a shock to find that all these picturesque appurtenances had vanished, not merely from use, but almost out of memory, and were relegated to curio cupboards as family heirlooms, while the few stalwarts who were not teetotallers drank whisky and soda like an ordinary

Englishman, which is very dull. From the cheerful and orderly symposium, however, at Priestlaw, where a farmer or two from East Lothian, a seed merchant from Edinburgh, or an auctioneer from the Merse might be assisting, I had to tear myself betimes with reluctance. For such company under such chairmanship was always good, and the converse interesting, topical, and sometimes racy, but a nearly twenty-mile ride did not admit of much time for dalliance. It seemed strange now to travel once again that rough, narrow road, clinging to the steep rounded breasts of the heath-clad hills, and twisting sharply inward for the readier bridging of each peaty burn that tinkled down towards the quickly shrinking streams of the infant Whiteadder, which curved through the rushing mossy bottom below. Time, which since then had brought such prodigious changes in the world below and in the world at large, had here at least stood absolutely still. The same old cry of curlews and wail of peewits and whistling of golden plover and call of anxious grouse, the plash of waters, and bleat of far-scattered sheep still sounded the same unchanging music of the wild.

It was now high August. The heather blazed its brightest upon the long slopes and mingled with the gold of the gorse upon the road edges and about the banks of the amber stream prattling below. Black peat hags, glistening mosses of emerald green, and tawny moor-grasses flecked white with the wild cotton-flower: scaurs of red sandstone, and vivid patches of sheep-nibbled turf all added their note to that beautiful many-tinted carpet, which a moorland lays against a summer sky. The Lammermoors, and the Merse overlooked by them, have inspired to song quite a goodly number of their sons and daughters from Thomas the Rhymer and old Sir Richard Maitland, through a list of something

like seventy minstrels, if mainly obscure ones, to the present day. Byrecleugh, a few miles to the west of Priestlaw, in the very heart of the hills, is known among antiquaries for a heap of stones some eighty yards long and ten to twenty feet in height, raised by pre-historic hands, and probably a long barrow, though, for some obscure reason, known by the natives as "The Mutiny Stone." But at Byrecleugh about a century ago lived a shepherd boy named John Usher, who died before he was twenty, and among his productions are these verses :—

"O Lammermoor, I love thee well:
Each mountain brow, each hollow dell,
Each craggy cliff, each rippling stream,
Each fountain glimmering with the beam
Of the far setting sun, each scene
Tells of what is and what has been.

When columned snow, by whirlwinds driven,
Hides the earth and veils the heaven,
And the loud fury of the wind
Rouses the terror of the mind,
And superstition's ghostly train
Arise in all their strength again:
These I love, on these I dwell,
I know no thought I love so well;
Whether in the summer's shine,
Or Winter's mighty storm,
Whatever's noble and sublime
Is blessèd in thy form.

At every fall, oh let me still
Delight to linger on thy hill,
Or, enfolded in my plaid,
On thy heather lay my head,
And dream a thousand dreams of bliss
And joy that knows no weariness."

These ingenuous lines are merely quoted for what they signify as the utterance of a Lammermoor shepherd boy,

and are further surprising as written in conventional English, and not in the vernacular one would expect. About the time of the shepherd's early death, the same wild parish of Longformacus gave birth to a man who became ultimately a great bookseller in the United States, and such a prominent leader, raconteur, and versifier at Scottish gatherings in that country as to earn the sobriquet of the "Burns of America." I feel sure, from samples, that his Scotch stories were better than his odes to the Lammermoors. One of the former related to Sir Walter Scott's death, and how his mother, a strict Calvinist of the old school, jeered at the expressions of grief uttered by his father on hearing the sad news, "Hoots, gudeman, he's weel awa'. He was just fillin' the heads o' the folks fu' o' downright havers."

After the last infant spring of the Whiteadder, a tiny thread gurgling in a peaty furrow beneath moss and rushes, has burrowed under the road, with Clint Dodd towering on the right, and Rangely, with its well-remembered and strange headgear of a whale's backbone on the left, came the top of the watershed. And then from this northern brink of the Lammermoors burst wide open of a sudden that glorious panorama of East Lothian and much more, spread like a living map beneath one. I used in old days to pull my horse up here, and I have always felt, and am sure others too have felt, that a noble prospect looks its noblest from a horse's back—and in youthful exuberance take my hat off to the finest county in Britain, nay, in the world! Not in the conventional sense of the term, nor as expressing the mere outpouring of the local patriot, for East Lothian was nothing in that sense to me. For in its own line, at any rate, with Midlothian its only rival, blended with it as here in the same view, there was no question as to other competitors. Any educated

Dutchman, Frenchman, German, or Russian concerned with agriculture could have told you that East Lothian stood for the highest exemplar of British agriculture, as Great Britain then stood the model in this respect, as in many others, for the world. But those, as I have said, were proud old times for British land. Our system seemed justified by results as the perfect and complete one, and foreigners pandered to our complacency. Free trade had had no chance as yet to touch it in a disturbed, war-torn, and but half-emancipated world. Now the mighty have fallen and are bidden to read, mark, and learn the ways of the once-despised and once-admiring foreigner, and set up again the little farmer whom we wiped out here with such ruthless contempt. Full of the pride in British agriculture common to any one at all associated with it in those days who could feel anything, I used, as related, to pull my horse up on this northern brink of Lammermoor, and look for long and with delight over a scene that touched at once many chords of the imagination. For glorious in a purely æsthetic sense, as in historic significance, was this rich-tinted, rolling carpet of East Lothian, girt about with wide waters and framed with shadowy mountains. I remember how strong an appeal it made, too, in a third sense, and how it stirred my fancy, this sudden unfolding of the greatest of agricultural counties, with its thousand bursting fields. The reader may smile at the notion of such feelings being aroused by anything of this kind. But let him, for this will be because he isn't old enough to realise the days of which I am writing, or has never had any associations with these matters at all, which is much more likely than not in this now trade-ridden country. At any rate, there is no call whatever to apologise for such emotions on the score of ingenuous youth. Cobbett was certainly not young,

and had seen much of two worlds when he went upon his rural rides. He was, moreover, a poet in mind, if not in expression, and he was, of course, an agriculturist. And there is no shadow of a doubt that had Cobbett arrived in any of his journeys on the brink of the Lammermoors, and been thus confronted with East Lothian lying at his feet, he would have broken out—not for splendour of hill, plain, or sea, more than other men; certainly not for its historical appeal, for he hated the ancients—but his soul would have been stirred within him as that of a man looking upon classic soil for the first time; though he would have cursed the social side of it after his truculent fashion. But the fact that this was East Lothian would have been enough for him, where the high altars of Ceres must surely have stood!

I stood here again, as these pages testify, but the other day, though with no horse unhappily beneath me, and looked out over the once familiar scene. As we are descending into it anon, however, I shall not dally here over a prospect that could only tempt one to touch on distant scenes that will doubtless be encountered presently at closer quarters. It is enough for the moment that only men and times and points of view have changed. No bit of Britain within the compass of a generation has superficially altered less. But of this later, while for the moment it is worth noting how much more precipitously this northern edge of the Lammermoors drops to the low country, as against the more gradual fashion in which their southern bounds, for the most part, dip to the Merse, shedding their wildness by degrees as they slip into the flat low country. Here on the north they tumble in fine shoulders of purple drapery and in steep wooded combes to foothill farms, where the ploughman and the shepherd may

be said to divide dominion. Newly-born burns—for the wide watershed of the Whiteadder, as we have seen, is pressed right up to the northern wall of the moors—leap rejoicing down steep, bosky glens, amid birch and bracken and native oak, to find their way eventually by Beil and Belton to the sea or to the Tyne, which drains the county of East Lothian from end to end. Away to the right, at the foot of the range, are the woods of Mr. Balfour's home at Whittinghame, with the humped back and ribbed sides of Traprain Law cast up behind them. To the left you may look down over the masses of foliage which mark the village of Gifford and Lord Tweeddale's seat of Yester. Immediately beneath, however, on the track of the steep road, which dives sharply down many hundreds of feet, is Nunraw, the seat, when I knew it, of a branch of the Hay family, but sold this long time. The house had just then been recently enlarged, but the ancient portion of the typical Border style remained, and still remains. It is not, however, the architecture, nor the true history of Nunraw, nor yet the beauty of its site tucked under the Lammermoors with a deep woody dene threaded by a mountain stream running immediately under it, that is for the moment of interest. For I have had the hardihood all my life to cherish a conviction, and carry it about with me, that Scott had Nunraw vaguely in his mind as the original of Ravenswood House. I had made up my mind in youth when circumstances kept me hereabouts, often for days together, that this was the scene of the unhappy loves of Edgar and Lucy ; that the woody burn in the grounds was that same one where they broke the coin and plighted their troth ; that the high-pitched rooms had witnessed the haughty scorn of Lady Ashton, the temporising craft of the Lord Keeper, the memorable tragedy of the bridal

chamber; that the village kirk of Garvald, just below, was the scene of those two gruesome and near events, the marriage and the funeral of the bride. The romantic beauty of the place and situation lent zest to these dreams, which only youth could enjoy quite so thoroughly. In this matter of the precise situation of Ravenswood, every now and again a correspondence upon the subject breaks out in the Scottish press. The

Nunraw.

last budget, a year or so ago, revealed a considerable measure of disregard, both of topography and the few aids to precision there are in the book itself. The material for the tragedy, as Scott tells us, was transferred from the west of Scotland, but that is not the immediate question. It must be frankly admitted, too, that Scott had almost certainly no definite place in his mind. So conjectures as to this or that particular spot are obviously futile. Nothing, indeed, but the fascination and fame of the story, with the tantalising measure of

local colouring the author puts into it, could keep alive the not unnatural desire of so many people in every generation to visualise the scene of the tragedy. All kinds of impossible places are suggested, partly because the topography of this corner is known to very few, even among Scotsmen, who are likely to take a hand in a controversy of this kind. It seems to have escaped many contributors to the subject that whatever Scott may have had in his mind, he distinctly sets down that Ravenswood House stood at the northern foot of the Lammermoors, and at the mouth of a pass from the Merse. This limits the locality to the mouth of the Pease Pass, otherwise Dunglass, where a neighbouring tower is portrayed on post cards as "Ravenswood," or else to the neighbourhood of the opening of the pass we have just travelled over. But the Pease Pass is rather an interval or gash between two sections of the Lammermoors than a pass in the generally understood sense of the term.

This signifies, however, nothing, since in chapter xx. the author, through the mouth of Craigengelt, makes the only definite utterance on this matter of Ravenswood House in the whole book, and, unless Scott himself is not held to be an authority on the site of his fancy, there seems absolutely nothing more to be said. For the swashbuckling captain in a village ale-house, while reporting the latest news of the Edgar and Lucy matrimonial prospects to his comrade and patron, Bucklaw, tells him it is in the mouth of all the gossips in the neighbourhood of Ravenswood "from Lammer Law to Traprain." This narrows the compass of discussion beyond dispute to Yester and Nunraw, both ancient seats, and the only ones within these limits. Yester, for its greater importance, has perhaps the greater claim. All this may seem futile. In a sense it is so, utterly.

But the discussion is a recognised one, and everything associated with Scott's topography has been made by himself so fascinating that I venture with all diffidence to put forward these facts, which will be patent enough to any one whom circumstances have made familiar with this little-known but romantic corner of East Lothian. One would be inclined to plump for Dunglass, if only for the comparative propinquity of Fast Castle. But what is one to think when Scott commits himself to the fact that his fancy is hovering over a spot fifteen miles away, between " Lammer Law and Traprain."

CHAPTER IX

ABBEY ST. BATHANS

A VERY frequent utterance of both speech and pen has it that the most attractive scenery in Britain is to be found among the foothills of moors and mountains. In Scotland, as already noticed, the charms of this neutral zone between the wild and the tame are often obliterated by the zeal of the northern farmer, and the plough at times brushes the very edge of the heather. But the East Lothian wall of the Lammermoors, where we closed the last chapter, is too steep and broken and rent by ravines to suffer greatly in this way at the hands of the most soaring agriculturist. On the Berwickshire side, it was noticed how the moors are apt to dip to the Merse in long sombre sweeps of reclaimed moss and straggling fir woods. But from Longformacus to Ellemford and Abbey St. Bathans—at the back of Duns in short—the Lammermoors break into the low country amid a delightful confusion of valley, woodland, and heath-clad heights, a very labyrinth of bosky glens so intricate that in spite of one or two tortuous narrow roads which crawl laboriously into it around the obstructing mass of Cockburn Law, a more secluded bit of Arcady would be hard to find. The Whiteadder, which here breaks through with resounding voice in many miles of twisting tempestuous course, and not seldom in deep rocky gorges not lightly to be seriously bridged for a scant traffic by prudent

county authorities, contributes to this seclusion as much as to its scenic glories.

Abbey St. Bathans, locked deep within it, is the heart of the region, and in the whole orbit of the Lammermoors there is no more delightful retreat. The Whiteadder has run down its four-mile course from Ellemford in a succession of pools and streams, and, after a sharp bend, spreads out in a broad, straight reach, where its waters, chastened in spirit by a low weir at the foot, roll in even current between the lawns and groves of the laird's house on one side, and on the other by mossy knowes clad with fern and indigenous oak woods. Hard by the bank nestles the ancient little church which serves a parish ranging far over hills and moors to the edge of East Lothian. A cluster of cottages, a manse, and some farm buildings make up the hamlet, while across the river, where a lusty burn comes pouring down a turf-carpeted oak-shaded glen, stands the schoolhouse and the post office. From this brief inadequate description it may be gathered that Abbey St. Bathans satisfies every claim to the idyllic. Moreover, it presents precisely the same appearance, if memory serves me, save for some ornamental planting, and has practically altered nothing since I knew it forty years ago, and used to cross the foot bridge, still swung high over the river, on the way from Grant's House to Ellemford. Yet this is only four miles from a great main line, and the roar of the Edinburgh and London trains can be heard in still weather from the hilltop above. But when the Whiteadder is high and the ford unnegotiable, which it may be for days together, wheel traffic is entirely cut off from the four miles of perpendicular by-way that leads to Grant's House station. Some habitations are perennially isolated from even that steep outlet by the

picturesque arrangements of nature in which their lines are cast. Never before have I seen villagers in quite fine clothes trundling a wheel-barrow with a trunk upon it a mile uphill over a moor to meet a trap as the most expeditious method of getting to a comparatively near station, and that one, too, on a great main line. For this is not the Hebrides! Yet I have here watched, nay walked beside, this archaic "outfit," as the Americans would say, more than once in a fortnight's sojourn as it proceeded laboriously up the long, gently-sloping moor from the village to the wind-swept cross-roads where I was domiciled.

It may be said at once that in the whole length and breadth of the Lammermoors, from the Soutra Pass to Grant's House, there are next to no facilities for the entertainment of the stranger, even of the most primitive kind – a condition of things which, as we have seen, did not obtain in former days. If he wants to explore them he must clamber through their outer barriers with every fresh returning morn, for with the exception, perhaps, of the pass into Ellemford, wheels of any kind will be found more toil than profit. I was fortunate, however, in finding a solitary exception. Now right on the very top of what in my youth was a heathery moor, but is now partially encroached upon by pastures and barley fields, there stood a half-ruinous house. It was the remnant, I believe, of a small wayside coaching inn. For on a road from Duns to Cockburnspath still existing, but in parts grass-grown, a coach is credibly reported to have once upon a time travelled, continuing thence, no doubt, to Edinburgh. In a portion of this tumble-down haunt of former revelry, a strange solitary being, much given to liberty and whisky and the illegal pursuit of game, had rigged up sufficient protection against the weather, and sat, no

doubt, free of rent. I regret very much that I had not the pleasure of his personal acquaintance, but he had the reputation of being a sort of chartered libertine in the rural sense of the word. He was indispensable to anglers for one thing, above all in assuring a good basket to those whose own skill was not equal to the achievement. He must also have been useful, or was possibly so formidable to the game owners that they winked at his notorious practice of potting grouse, partridges, or hares—with discreet limitations no doubt —out of his drawing-room window, together with other free-and-easy practices. Shooting was not arithmetically so solemn a business as it is everywhere now; and if I have said that time has stood still on the Lammermoors, this statement must be modified in so far that the heather in those days all over the hills grew for the most part rankly at its own sweet will, whereas it is now systematically burned, as everywhere else. And it must be admitted that the young plant in bloom has a more gorgeous effect on a hillside than where it is older and ranker. The lines of butts, too, are novelties, and undeniably disfiguring ones, since that time, when driving was scarcely anywhere practised. But of the poacher who provoked the insertion of this saving clause, his weird lair had long disappeared, and in its place a small shooting-box, in type if not literally such, had arisen amid a pleasant little garden, and a screen of quick-growing poplars were already rustling high all round it. A veritable little oasis was this acre of fruit and vegetables, and flowers, amid the wide waste of sweeping sheep pastures, and purple grouse moors, for the bloom of the heather still lingered, though August was fast drawing into September.

It had fallen to other occupancy, which is of no import here except for the fact that it provided us

with snug and comfortable quarters, and, of its kind, as ideal a perch for any one who loves the moors and all that in them lies as I ever encountered. For from the wicket-gate of the little walled garden the Lammermoors rolled away to the westward for miles interminable, while in the foreground we looked right down over Abbey St. Bathans and the deep-channelled, woody

Above Abbey St. Bathans.

vale of the Whiteadder. The intermittent call of grouse could be heard all day, and at evening they would come flying past the windows for a brief turn on the grass pastures; while partridges, which flourish greatly on the tillage fringes of the moor, were calling from all sides on the seeds or barley stubbles. At the back of us two great farms heaved up and down in big ridges to Grant's House and the railroad three miles away. But it might have been forty for any suggestion

of a murmur from the outer world that ever reached us. I take it there was no higher ground between us and the Ural Mountains to the eastward, and, indeed, the air of the eastern Lammermoors is absolutely the most invigorating I know of anywhere. It ought to be. A person knowledgeable in such things would at once pick them out upon the map as geographically calculated to enjoy the highest distinction in this particular. They are also unenviably distinguished for perhaps the severest snowstorms that strike the British islands. When the Storm-God is on the rampage in the winter season, the newspaper reader with his toes on the fender probably does not notice that almost invariably the Lammermoors and their sheep farmers are quoted in the weather reports as among the most heavily punished, or, at any rate, the most deeply buried in the whole country.

We started in our moorland quarters with a thirty hours' rain—not ordinary rain, but unrelenting, lashing torrents, borne upon a south-west gale. Now rain in Kent, or Essex, or Warwickshire, and the like, is merely a necessary evil. It has scarcely any æsthetic compensations at all—just a veil drawn down upon everything out of doors that is good to look upon. Such are pre-eminently fair-weather countries, and afford, in short, little scope for the great qualities of the Tempest. Now, on the Wiltshire Downs a wild wet day begins to be uplifting; on the moors it reaches the sublime. At least, it has always thus seemed to me. To some temperaments, I know, all this is horrible. The very qualities that brace the fancy and touch the imagination in one case depress some other equally susceptible soul to the very depths of despondency. My companion suffered greatly in spirits from the shrieking of the wind as it buffeted our snug, aerial

fortress of good stone and slate, and lashed the little belt of tossing trees that fringed us out from the moors, and hurled the rain in spasmodic douches upon the window panes for a whole night and a day. To one of us, all this, with the chasing of the low clouds across the endless sweeps of lonely moor, the whirling of the restless storm-harried birds, gulls, crows, plovers, and such like, that have no shelter for their heads, was a mild inferno. To the other, this elemental frenzy let loose in an appropriate and responsive playground was a delight.

There were other points of view in the establishment, of course. Our host, for instance, a genial little man, great at a crack, whose spare hours were mainly spent by the riverside, took a thoroughly cheerful view of the storm, though it was blowing his apples about sadly. "Aye, but the burns 'ull fush gran' the morrow's morn, an' I've a fine lot o' worms tae." And so they did. The womenfolk obviously took the same view of the storm as my depressed companion, though upon purely practical grounds natural to housewives. We were all at one, however, in enjoying the mild excitement as to whether the postman would cross the ford of the river Eye, whose infant streams ran down through moorish and boggy pastures on the station side of the house. But if a stormy day upon the moor has its sombre and weird sort of fascination for some of us, when the clouds roll away and the sun bursts upon the battered spongy waste, there can be no two opinions. Divergent temperaments which a display of elemental forces thrust for the moment so mysteriously far apart forget their difference when the curtain of morning rises on another scene; a scene radiant with sunshine, canopied with blue skies, and balmy with soft scent-laden zephyrs. Such, indeed, are days worth living

for upon the moors, and this was one of them. The waning heather had gathered a new lease of life, and glowed with reinvigorated glory. The sheep pastures glistened with a fresh touch of verdure. The brown burns shone brimming and lusty in the valleys, and from every side came that delicious sound of gurgling waters. Our host was away after breakfast, with "a piece" in his pocket and a bag of worms dependent from his waistcoat button, and didn't come home till long after dark. His family were just beginning to get anxious about him when he turned up, still full of enthusiasm, and a basket of trout into the bargain.

As we went down the long glistening slope towards the Whiteadder in the morning sunshine, its angry voice away in the woods below was plain enough, keeping up, as it were, the orgy of the preceding day, when everything else in the earth below and the heavens above had shaken off their delirium and relapsed into a sunny dream. It had already sunk many feet, but was still over its banks and rolling finely down the comparatively unobstructed reach which divides the scattered dwellings of St. Bathans. Just below the hamlet, however, the encompassing hills begin gradually to close upon one another, their sides breast-high with dense mantling bracken, shaggy with scattered growths of birch and oak, ash and alder, and their feet rudely shod with huge crags and boulders. It is just here that the river, having by this time gathered the waters of its many tributary burns into its bosom, begins its long struggle out of the Lammermoors into the Merse. Pent in at places by precipitous walls of rock, from whose mossy crests gnarled and twisted trunks shake out their canopy of varied foliage, birch and rowan, oak and alder, above the dark waters, the whole volume of the river rushes in deep narrow fumes that in normal

times you might almost compass in a leap. Then comes a breathing space in some wide heaving pool, where from one shore a silvery beach shelves gently away into unknown depths, and upon the other, far out of reach of the angler's tormenting fly, the trout rise peacefully beneath the pendent boughs of great forest trees.

The rush of the water in a flood through these gorges is a sight well worth encountering many difficulties to enjoy. And when the river has run down again, when its first yellowy-brown fury has modified, and the succeeding "black water" stage dear to the local worm-fisher has run gradually down through subtle shades to the clear amber which is its normal colouring, the infinite beauty of these few sequestered miles of river scenery can be of all times the best appreciated. More than one warm sunny day we wiled away in delightful lazy fashion upon the banks of one or other of these glorious sylvan pools. A lunch-basket, a book, and a rod, not carried with serious or agitating intent, made a complete equipment. Our resting-place was a clean grassy bank fenced about with bracken, whence a white gravelly shore shelved into a broad heaving pool radiant with many hues from its varying depth and its varied bottom and flecked by the swaying shadows of oak and willow, flung over it from a woody cliff beyond. A rush of white water above, and a long white vista of glancing water below, vanishing into more woods and crags, beneath the purple shoulder of a mighty upstanding hill—what better haven could there be on a summer day? The resident population of the pool edges, too, begin in time to tolerate the intruder. The white-breasted dipper ceases to duck and bow at you from his mossy rock in mid-stream, and settles comfortably down, and even ventures a tune or two.

The belated sandpiper ceases to scud on frightened wings, but halts anon upon the silvery strand, where the perky yellow wagtails have long been friendly. A kingfisher flashes by, a streak of glory, and a heron beats his slow way over the trees where the cushats stir and rustle. Not that I allowed the river to run down out of fishing order after such a glorious spate, without any more serious onslaught upon the trout than intermittent contests with rising fish in one or other of these pools of enchantment. Furthermore, I felt it a sort of pious duty,—almost a tribute to the memory of departed youth and its friends,—to fish once at least over the old familiar reaches between Abbey and Ellemford. I was anxious, moreover, to see if the Whiteadder, after four more decades of attention from a nation of fishermen, could really be the prolific Whiteadder of old. It may interest the angler upon this account, if it bores the layman, to know that about sunset the day's spoil of a companion and myself just filled one large creel, with which we made glad the hearts of several riverside cottagers, while the third of our angling trio had enough in his basket to supply our house on the moor. Like every one else here, we used the same old patterns, the spider hackles, that Stewart popularised and swore by half a century ago, and ours were dressed by my companion with a sapient touch as to shade and size that a sustained acquaintance with the Whiteadder had taught him. I might add that we returned to the water far more fish of the smaller variety than we kept. And these rivers, be it remembered, have to stand the onslaught of skilful bait fishermen (too much worm is the Scotsman's failing), who basket almost everything relentlessly. I commend this little extract from a veracious angler's diary to the reflection of some owners of mountain

rivers—not to the dog-in-the-manger sort of man, he is hopeless—but to the generous and well-intentioned,

The Whiteadder below Abbey St. Bathans.

who is more than apt to be unduly timid about over-fishing.

Far above these fretting channels, upreared on a

sharp shoulder of Cockburn Law, stands the Broch or supposed Pictish camp of Edinshall. It is well calculated to astonish a visitor unprepared for the spectacle and only familiar with the usual prehistoric encampment concealed under centuries of turf. It certainly astonished me, for scarcely any of my acquaintances in the Border country seemed to know much about it, and, indeed, I had almost begun to consider before achieving the summit whether the result would duly reward a rather perpendicular scramble of three or four hundred feet, much of it through dense bracken shoulder-high, though this, by the way, is not the right approach. I breathed a note of thankfulness, however, when the top was reached, that a worthier instinct had prevailed. For I had certainly never seen the like before, which is not altogether surprising, as there is, I believe, no counterpart in the whole of England and Wales, and only three or four in Southern Scotland, of which this one is the finest specimen. Instead of the usual grassy ditches and ramparts of an ordinary British camp, I beheld a circular building of beautifully laid dry stone, about six feet high and about seventy-five in diameter. It suggested the commencement of an enormous stone tower, suddenly interrupted in the construction, and of any period—a recent one for choice, one might conceivably imagine, so perfect and undisturbed and even moss-free is the work. The foundation is of large flat stones projecting beyond the face, while the filling of the interstices by small stones is very neatly done. The walls, of whinstone from the same hill, are about fifteen feet thick. You may walk about with ease on their flat surface into which two or three neatly constructed chambers are built, while the only entrance is at the east side. But this mysterious building is merely the centre—the citadel of refuge

perhaps—of a large camp and the house of the chief. For scattered round about are quite a large number of circular or oval stone huts of various sizes, all of them cast down, but the broken walls remaining to the height in many cases of a foot or two. These of course, are familiar enough, south of Tweed, as the Cytiav Gwæddelod of the Welsh, and numerous, I believe, in Cornwall. Around the camp, on the three accessible sides are two deep ditches and two high ramparts. On the north-east side, the brink of the projecting ledge, there is but a single ditch between two low ramparts, while the steep face of the declivity has been obviously scarped in places. It is a noble and commanding site, looking away over to the outer hills of the Lammermoors upon their south-eastern fringe, while far below the White-adder flashes amid crags and woods. The name is derived from Edwin, King of Northumbria, to which province all this country at that time appertained. But it can surely have been only as an occupant that a Saxon was concerned with such a fortress as this? Papers have been read and printed upon it, but, so far as I am aware, no first-rate authorities have taken in hand or made pronouncement upon this remarkable place.

The country people have their legend, which, though interesting as folklore, hardly assists in the solution of the problem. According to them, it was the lair of an altogether troublesome giant, whose reputed achievements in the way of raiding and rieving cast those of the Kerrs and Armstrongs, the Charltons and Robsons of the Middle Marches into the shade. He appears to have made life intolerable in the neighbourhood for all his days, and giants lived long. On one occasion he was carrying away a bull on his back and a sheep under each arm from Blackerstone, near Duns, and as

he crossed the Whiteadder at the "Strait loup" a pebble washed into his shoe, which so worried him as he breasted the hill, that he plucked it out and tossed it down into the river, where it still stands, weighing about two tons. I am afraid the education of the hundred and fifty souls who inhabit the parish of Abbey St. Bathans has been too much for the faith in such beautiful stories, though it is happily preserved in their memory. Eighty years ago, I find by the reports of the then minister of the parish that the schoolmaster taught not only Latin but Greek, and charged seven shillings a quarter for this extra. No giant could live against this. I should judge, however, from my passing intercourse both to-day and yesterday with these dwellers in Arcady, that the old-time flavour of classical learning, which touched this like other Scottish parishes, had passed out of mind, and that utility holds the field. If Greek is threatened at Oxford and Cambridge, it could hardly be expected to maintain itself on the Lammermoors.

St. Bathans, colloquially known as "Abbey," as will doubtless be surmised, derives its name from a Celtic saint. There were several of the name, who appear to be distinguished by a slight difference in the spelling of their respective names, almost as though they had been Edinburgh worthies and contemporaries of Sir Walter Scott. When seventeenth-century scholars were in the habit of spelling their own names in two or three different ways on the same page, I don't profess to understand how these various St. Bathans of the early Celtic Church have been disentangled from one another by their signatures, if they had any. But no doubt there are further and sufficient reasons for identifying this particular St. Bathan with a cousin and disciple of St. Columba and his successor as Abbot

of Iona. The missionary achievements of the great Irish Saint in Scotland about A.D. 560 extended from the west coast all across the country into the kingdom of Northumberland. Among the many disciples who followed him in his wanderings was this young cousin, whom he had himself taken charge of and reared from a boy. St. Bathan showed himself worthy of his rearing, and performed many miracles by land and sea, and founded many churches in what we now call Scotland, of which this was one. Merely as evidence of their extraordinary enterprise when mischief was afoot, it may be mentioned that it was burned by the Danes when they destroyed Coldingham. It is much more interesting to remember that a convent of Cistercian nuns, under the title of a priory, was founded here in the end of the twelfth century by Ada, daughter of William the Lion, and wife of Patrick, Earl of Dunbar. Liberal gifts of land, both by the founders and succeeding benefactors, were deeded to the priory, and the list of them if now resumed would show an immense rent-roll. As usual, at the Reformation they were "alienated," in this case by the priors, and, as one would expect, the Earl of Home had the disposal of them, and naturally gave them to a near relation. It is in keeping with the spirit of the wholesale robbery which distinguished this upheaval in both kingdoms, that Elizabeth Home, who thus annexed the profits of the Abbey, assumed the title of prioress, and even her husband, apparently without any jocular intent—perhaps because he was the son of a bishop—took on the name of prior. Thus sanctified they proceeded to retail the property in lots to various people, or in other words, no doubt, to the highest bidders.

The last stones of the priory buildings, which adjoined the church on the river bank, were carried away

more than a hundred years ago, and no doubt many walls and barns and cottages in the hamlet indirectly owe much of their substance to the piety of William the Lion's daughter. Part of the walls in the little church are, I believe, remains of the original building, while the site of a chapel is pointed out a few hundred yards to the east of the church in an enclosure, which is still called "the chapel field." Near by, too, is St. Bathans spring, held of old as a sacred well with all the suitable healing properties attached to the character. The assertion that the religious orders showed an extraordinary partiality for the most beautiful and romantic spots is a sufficiently trite one, though undoubtedly a combination of the necessary water and the desirable seclusion all made for this delectable result. I know many infinitely grander and more conspicuously beautiful monastic sites than this one of St. Bathans. But for its quite exceptional atmosphere of peace and unchanged, undisturbed seclusion from the world; for its situation on the verdant edge of a broad, untainted, sonorous stream, instinct with the life and freshness of the moors; for the grouping of the gnarled oak woods, clinging to the mossy, ferny knowes in the foreground; for the many little wild and woody burns that come pouring in here from far moorland sources; and lastly, for the happy decorative touch contributed by the pleasant gardens of the laird, neither too elaborate nor overwhelming for the picture;—in short, for its harmony in every feature, one does not readily forget this haunt of ancient peace, however widely one has wandered. For myself, I had carried it about through life, but always with a more than half-suspicion that the natural limitations, together with the fond associations of youth, all made for the usual measure of disenchantment. But there was nothing of the kind

here. I felt, on the contrary, an almost impersonal respect for the perceptions of callow immaturity, and an inclination to apologise for the unjust but natural suspicions I had harboured of an unsophisticated self.

Just above the village the large burn of the Monynut pours its waters into a broad, tumbling pool at the bend of the river. A mile or so up its twisting glen, which gradually sheds the woodland that decorates its lower reaches, once stood the church of Strafontane, attached successively to the Abbeys of Alnwick and Dryburgh. Originally a hospital, founded in the reign of David II., church services, though not burials, seem to have ceased there at the Reformation, when its parish was merged in that of St. Bathans. Within the memory of old people, known to me in former days, its ruins and some crumbling gravestones still survived, but have been long since swept out of existence by the plough. Of legendary giants, Abbey St. Bathans, as we have seen, boasts a most efficient one. At Godscroft, a farm above the Monynut, there dwelt in the seventeenth century something of a literary giant in his way, and the father of a family who maintained the tradition. This was David Hume—not, of course, the other and better-known David Hume of the Merse, but a person of note all the same in the Scotland of his day, chiefly for his Latin poems. He was a son of the house of Wedderburn, and furthermore wrote many tracts on the Union of England and Scotland, though he died years before the consummation of that long-impending political marriage, so emphatically one of convenience, if not of necessity, rather than of love.

But I have said nothing yet of the fine woods of larch, fir, ash, and other trees of a century's growth that adorn the hollows and gentler slopes of the left bank of the river below Abbey. Dating from an old

quaintly-fashioned sporting seat of the Earls of Haddington, now a farmhouse on the river bank, these groves of large trees are grouped irregularly for two or three miles along the lower hill slopes, and upon grassy hollows carpeted with ferns and flowers, and abounding, like all this country, with wild raspberries of delicious flavour, tons of which must rot ungathered and unseen in these secluded haunts. Since the great storm of a fortnight earlier, we had revelled in almost continuous sunshine. But the morning upon which we bade a reluctant farewell to the house on the moor, the heavens were descending in a steady torrent without any of the inspiring accessories of their former outbreak. It was barely four miles to the station, but miles of the sort that in a storm a heavily-laden horse has practically to walk nearly every yard. Again, too, our thoughts were turned to the ford of the river Eye, not this time for the trifle of a postman and his light mail bag, but for ourselves. The little Eye, however, which courses through a boggy valley between the big farms of Quixwood and Butterdean, whose large steadings in their snug firwood shelters are the only dwellings on the route, had considerately deferred its serious rage. But there is no more untoward preliminary to a railway journey than to sit in an open trap, even for three-quarters of an hour, with buckets of water being emptied on you the whole way.

The philosopher will always console himself for such minor mischances by reflecting how much worse they might have been. I recalled for my own comfort a lamentable scene, witnessed upon this very same day of the month just a year before. For upon the platform at Haverfordwest, I had witnessed the open brake which runs daily over the seventeen miles and the sixteen hills from the remote cathedral town of St. David's

disgorge a dozen or more passengers, drenched to the very skin by just such a downpour as this. These

On the Eye near Grant's House.

wretched beings, many of them ladies, had not a trifling railway journey like ourselves on this occasion, but one of eight or ten hours, being all bound for London. Heaven knows how they fared! Butterdean, now

Mr. Arthur Balfour's property, perched high on the ridge overlooking the main-line, was the last seat held by the extinct and forgotten race of Ellem alluded to at Ellemford. There is nothing feudal left in the comfortable and typical Berwickshire farmhouse, approached by a carriage-drive through a grove of firs as black as night. Probably the Ellems, who vanished from here and from ken in the sixteenth century, lived at Kilspendie Castle, the site of which, but nothing more, lies a few hundred yards away.

The North British railroad, to which belongs the Berwick to Edinburgh section of this international artery, is not prodigal of slow trains. It is all very fine to live on a famous main-line, but there is no particular privilege in watching express trains bounding along from London to Edinburgh, and from Edinburgh to London, or in admiring the earth-shaking speed at which they travel, and the prodigious distances they run without stopping. They do not stop for you, and, indeed, the opportunities for local pilgrimage upon this classic highway are extremely limited, and apt, in the matter of going and returning, to provoke ill-humour with the Powers.

The great North road, however, which from near Grant's House and long before it, follows the main-line westward, pursues a singularly picturesque course through the Pease Pass. The Pease Burn, which comes down hereabouts from the Lammermoors and waters the narrow glen, is the best of company, though often invisible, as it urges its clear streams through mazes of wild undergrowth, birch and willow, spruce, hazel, and larch, and through tangled masses of heather, broom, gorse, and wild flowers. Plunging in cascades from pool to pool, it eventually disappears into that tremendous gorge where, deep buried between two

almost precipitous walls of unbroken foliage, it escapes through an open and grassy vale to the sea near Cockburnspath. Standing upon the bridge swung across Pease Dean, some 130 feet above the bed of the burn, the mass of opulent and varied foliage that clothes the steeps upon either side, both above and below, forms one of the most striking displays of hanging woodland I know of anywhere.

This "Pass of Peaths," as previously noted, has been for all time and by time's changing methods of progress the principal route from the south into Scotland, or, to be literal, to Edinburgh, the Lothians, and Fife, and all that country which till modern times stood for so much of what the name of Scotland indicated. To speculate on the mighty men of old who have traversed this narrow glen would be much like charging one's imagination with all the illuminati who have gone to Edinburgh in the last seventy years by the Great Northern railroad. The men of old, however, really knew it, and with an intimacy, no doubt, in which regard for the scenery had small part. Not one in a thousand of the moderns have the faintest idea what they are passing through, and the great gorge itself is invisible from the railway.

Somerset, whose ravaging progress has from a literary point of view its lighter side in the entertaining gossip of his special correspondent, Dr. Patten, had some anxious hours in forcing the pass, which was held by Sir George Douglas, who made its natural defences more formidable by digging lateral trenches at the East Lothian end.

Alluding to the Pease Dean itself, we are told "so steepe be these banks on eyther syde, and so depe to the bottom, that who goeth straight downe shall be in daunger of tumbling and the commer-up so sure of puffyng and

payne; for remedy whereof the travellers that way have used to pass it by paths and footways leading slopwise; of the number of which paths they call it somewhat nicely ye Peaths." The Scottish trenches were found "rather hindering than utterly letting." The limitations of modern prose, it must be confessed, seem at times inadequate, compared to the delightful

The Pease Bridge.

freedom of these quaint Tudor chroniclers. "The puffying and payne of the commer-up" is admirable, so is "the rather hindering than utterly letting" of an obstacle. When "His Lord's Grace," however, "vowed that he would put it in prose, for he wolde not step one foote out of his course appointed," the idiom takes on an obscurer form.

The Pease Pass bothered Cromwell no little. "It is easier for ten men to defend this pass," he wrote, "than

for forty to make way." It was naturally infested by banditti, and all kinds of stories are told of mediæval raids made on these people, and the huge bags of brigands' heads that were sometimes the result. Much of it is even still mossy and boggy. No doubt in old days it was something of a jungle. The name broadly signifies the "Pass of paths," which suggests tortuous tracks leading through thickety swamps. For the Lammermoors rise precipitously on one side, and on the other are the Coldingham moors. The sites of fragments of castles are scattered all along it as far as the Merse. As you approach Cockburnspath, once Coldbranspath, and now colloquially "Co'path," the considerable remains of a fortified tower stand by the roadside. The enterprising picture post-card vendor, as previously noted, has labelled this with indiscriminating audacity "Ravenswood." But enough of this subject, unless to remark that the social ambitions of the Lord Keeper and his haughty dame in the expansive period of William and Mary scarcely harmonise with a lodging in a cramped Border tower. It assuredly remains, however, to be set down that the MS. of the *Bride of Lammermoor* is at Dunglass House, close by, the seat for some generations of the Hall family. It is reported of a practical, but unhistorical lady tourist from Glasgow that she misdoubted the identity of the aforesaid "Ravenswood House," as she was convinced a family of such distinction would never have built their house "so close to the road," alluding to the modern highway. Dunglass is a later residence, built on the site of a really important castle. It belonged to the Homes, when Sir George Douglas held it in 1547 against Somerset, or rather surrendered it, for according to Patten the garrison only consisted of "Twenty-one sober soldiers, all so apparelled and appointed that I never saw such a

bunch of beggars come out of one house in my life. Yet sure it would have rued any good housewife's heart to have beholden the great unmerciful murder that our men made of the brood of geese, and good laying hens that were slain there that day, which the wives of the town had penned up in holes in the stables and cellars of the castle ere we came." Somerset razed the castle, but the Homes erected a larger one, and twice entertained James I. on his journeyings south with all his retinue. In the Covenanters' resistance to Charles I. in 1640, Lord Haddington occupied Dunglass, but was blown up with most of his friends by the explosion of the powder magazine, ignited, it is said, by an English page boy, in revenge for some slighting remarks made by the earl on his countrymen.

One striking feature, however, of this famous pass is the manner in which it opens out into the rich and fertile fields of East Lothian. And further, how just at the entrance, the way out is obstructed by two parallel and deep-wooded deans, threaded by the streams which, running down from the Lammermoors, have in the course of ages cut through the red sandstone. Modern traffic makes nothing of such obstacles. But in old times one seems to see them as two great trenches cut by nature as a last defence behind the Pease Pass of the fairest bit of Scotland and the open road to Edinburgh.

Even peaceful transportation appears to have been a formidable business through this pass. It sounds like a huge practical joke that when a large sum of money had to be forwarded to Edinburgh in the fifteenth century, it was despatched in penny and twopenny pieces. "For God's sake," wrote the embarrassed English envoy to Scotland, in despairing accents, "send silver and gold on the next occasion." Cartloads of pennies toiling

through the Pease Pass and the miry tracks of Lothian to the Scottish capital has its humorous side.

The whole parish of Cockburnspath, with its deep ravines and its varied surface, from the rich, red tillage lands upon the cliff plateaus to the wild upland pastures of the Lammermoors, is both picturesque and interesting. The oak seems to thrive prodigiously in some of the deans, while in that of Dunglass the beech trees have grown to a great size. The wild cliff scenery of the St. Abb's promontory, as earlier noted, is only modified as it descends to the mouth of the Pease Dean. Beneath the red sandstone cliffs beyond this is a small colony of fishermen, while in the village itself, half a mile inland, the parish church, part of which is very old, possesses a most amazing circular tower. There is a good inn here, too, a thing worthy of note in this country, and the limited resources of the little village are taxed, I believe, to the uttermost in the holiday season by visitors from Edinburgh. But before going actually down into East Lothian, I must not forget the quite pathetic-looking ruin of the little chapel of St. Helens set in a lonely spot near the cliff edge. It was once the church of the long extinct parish of Oldcambus, and is supposed to be of Saxon origin, though so rude and rough it might be anything. It was dedicated to St. Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, and its erection is associated with a time-honoured local legend, which relates how three daughters of a Northumbrian king, terrified at the sanguinary conflicts then waging in that ancient Saxon kingdom, decided to seek refuge in some quieter region to the northward. So setting sail with their attendants, and heading their barques for the Firth of Forth, they were constrained by stress of weather to put in behind the headland of St. Abb's, where they found safety and hospitality in

the Priory of Coldingham. In gratitude for both these good things they each determined to found a chapel, dedicating them to the respective saints through whose good offices they believed their deliverance was owing. So—

> "They all built kirks to be nearest the sea,
> St. Abb's, St. Helen, and St. Bee.
> St. Abb's upon the nabbs, St. Helen upon the lea,
> But St. Ann's upon Dunbar sands
> Stands nearest to the sea."

But what is most impressive about St. Helens, the only one of which any stone is standing, is, perhaps,

St Helens Chapel.

the old graveyard. Utterly neglected and unkempt, out of the tangled grass a number of inscribed tombstones rise amid the wreck of others which lie around shattered or tilted at all angles. The earliest inscription I could read was 1646. Another was to John Laune, weaver of Pepperton, born in 1698 and deceased in 1783, with his wife, who died in 1740. From this forlorn and long-abandoned burial-ground above the sea there is a fine prospect of the low red cliffs of East Lothian, with their green caps curving away

towards Dunbar, the Bass Rock, and North Berwick Law, in vivid contrast to the blue of the sea and the white lines of the insurging tides that even in fair weather find their breaking point far from shore upon the reefs that line this inhospitable coast.

CHAPTER X

FARMS AND FARMERS IN EAST LOTHIAN

The alternative designations of the county, which in this season of harvest now spreads before us its undulating carpet of radiant patchwork between the broad, blue waters of the Firth and the long swell of the Lammermoors, is a trifle bewildering to the outsider. It makes for further haziness in regard to such of Scotland as is neither within the orbit of the tourist nor the grouse moor market, and I have, of course, only the benighted Southerner in mind. It is from no lack of respect for his Northern neighbours that the average Englishman cultivates this ingenuous innocence, geographical and etymological, for of that I will venture to say the most prickly Scot could never complain. He is quite catholic in these matters, and is almost as foggy, and quite as content to remain so, regarding such parts of his own country as lie outside his orbit. There is no reason to suppose that the well-to-do men and women of Scotland are qualified to fling stones across the Border on this account. "I am afraid very few of us know much of our own country" is a platitude of which the present writer, for reasons not inscrutable, is the humble and constant recipient, and there is nothing for it but an unreserved acceptance of the obvious. There is a familiar, but happily now rare type of politician, only known in Britain, whose motto is "every country but my own." In the more venial sense of the phrase now under discussion, irreproach-

ably patriotic persons by the thousand might as justly be branded with it.

The convertible terms of Haddingtonshire and East Lothian are undeniably confusing to aliens in view of this general fogginess. If the burning of a country house or an election meeting from this quarter are reported in the London dailies, they will have occurred in "Haddingtonshire." In the agricultural column on the next page the root crops of "East Lothian" will be described as in a flourishing condition. The writer of agricultural knowledge, that is to say, has an unconscious respect for tradition. East Lothian will have a certain classic ring in his ear, and if he has a sense of style as well, the cadence of the term, as opposed to the preposterous ill-accentuated mouthful of the alternative, would settle the question. The writer concerned with reporting politics or thunderstorms or motor trials very wisely uses the hideous official designation of Haddingtonshire, just as if it were any ordinary county. I never heard a farmer in or out of it use any term but East Lothian, and I fancy the folk of Linlithgow follow the same time-honoured and admirable practice. Midlothian has no alternative, though on official documents, I believe, the "County of Edinburgh" is the correct form. Even a Saxon tongue, with its awkward and tiresome predilection for the first syllable at the expense of the rest, would boggle at "Edinburghshire." Many score southern golfers, of course, visit the classic links upon the East Lothian coast; but very few of them, I imagine, know what county they are in, and care less, which is characteristic. "Where am I?" said a gorgeous but polite motorist to me one day upon the road just east of Cockburnspath. He was entrenched within the body of a great and powerful car by stacks of golf clubs, fishing rods, and gun cases.

He had come from the far north and was on his return south. In reply to my query he said he had a road map; but it was nothing more. "Am I still in Scotland?" I told him he was still in Scotland, and in East Lothian —a gratuitous crumb of information which did not seem to convey anything definite—and furthermore, that he had the whole county of Berwick yet to traverse.

"I thought Berwick was a town; I had a half mind to try the links there."

"That is North Berwick," I replied, "and it lies over yonder behind you. But there's a town of Berwick, and county too, which you will be in immediately."

He was very grateful for this elementary piece of information, and asked me the best route to York, concerning which I laid him under further obligations for half the distance.

"Now," he said, "I wish you would let me tow you there." For I should have said that a bicycle was leaning up against the wall, and I had been sitting on a gate looking at some men beginning to lead a magnificent crop of barley, and wondering how many quarters an acre it would run to.

I thanked him cordially, and said I did not want to go to York, as I was, in fact, going out to lunch a mile or two down the road.

He was very pressing, however, that I should change my plans, and attach myself to the rear of his forty horse-power car. He had carried a young man thus-wise, he said, at thirty miles an hour the day before, for some prodigious distance, to his infinite satisfaction, without a catastrophe. I retorted as nicely as I could—for I have never met so grateful or so philanthropic a motorist in the guise of a stranger on any highway—that I wasn't a young man, and did not in the least want to go to York or even Newcastle, and most certainly

not at thirty miles an hour—above all, on a bicycle of nameless brand that I had hired for the day in Dunbar. This last pretext seemed to have some sense in it, and we parted friends. I took the opportunity of advising him, however, to refrain from attaching even the young and the reckless to his car over the North road beyond the Tweed. For every hundred yards or so, upon the Northumbrian section of that famous highway there is, without fail, a large fragment of loose whinstone, more or less in the middle. What would happen to the man in tow when he blindly struck the first of these may be left to the imagination.

About a couple of miles from Cockburnspath, a sequestered village, lying amid the bare cultivated foothills of the Lammermoors and just in East Lothian, is occasionally visited by antiquarian societies. This is Oldhamstocks, a typically Saxon name in this very Saxon country, Auld-ham being obvious, and Stoc, I believe, also indicating a place or home. The point of interest is a little thirteenth-century chancel, long disused but structurally intact, and in strange conjunction with an uncompromising type of the eighteenth-century Scotch kirk. The scarcity of pre-Reformation survivals gives local interest to fragments that in the happier hunting-grounds of the south would attract slight notice. But the mere fact of such rarity, and the mere distinction of having survived the far more relentless forces of destruction, English and Scottish, that operated here, lends a certain pathetic interest to a monkish ivy-covered chancel, leaning up against a friendly, tolerant, but frankly hideous design of the bald days of Presbyterianism. As a matter of fact, the little chancel, with its decorated window tracery still complete, had some further interest in not being monkish in so far that the church and advowson never was the

property of a monastery, but appertained for all traceable times to the Lord of the Manor or Barony. Oldhamstocks, too, infringes the usual Saxon custom just alluded to, in that the accent is here thrown on the penultimate.

I journeyed out one day to this village, which is a marked exception to the usual East Lothian type. For it lies aloof from the world, and between high hills which tillage has furrowed nearly to their summits, leaving green rounded crests of sheep pasture. The village itself stands picturesquely along a green, with the church and manse at one end of it in southern fashion, and looks like a place that has nourished hardy hinds and stout prejudices. I wasn't thinking of that, however, when I left the churchyard to retrace my steps and fell into company on the highway with a man who was certainly the former and deeply imbued with the latter. He was advanced in years and rather low in stature, but bore upon one shoulder with apparent indifference a log of portentous dimensions. On my remark that it looked like a wet night, with some further commonplace regarding the old part of the church, the following dialogue ensued :—

" Aye, it's a thousan' year auld they say ; just yin o' thae auld monkish buildings."

" It is between six and seven hundred years old," I replied.

" Deed, then, an' how do ye ken that ? "

" I can tell it for a certainty by the window for one thing."

" Ye can ken how mony hun'erd year old it is by looking at the windy ? Mon, that's wonderfu'. I've heard tell there's the marks of anither auld buildin' on the top o' yon brae."

" What sort of building was it ? "

"Oh, jist some o' thae auld papish nonsense; and as to that, I'm thinkin' we'll a' be Romans agin sune."

For the moment it only crossed my mind that some vague echoes of advancing ritualistic practices across the Border might have reached Oldhamstocks through the weekly paper.

"Well, you're safe enough in old Scotland at any rate."

"Safe in auld Scotland!" the little man shouted with a voice quivering either with excitement or the weight of the weaver's beam, to use a metaphor appropriate to the occasion, under which he was labouring. "Safe in auld Scotland! Auld Scotland's ganging to Rome jist as fast as any of 'em."

"At least," I said, "there's nothing of that up here in Oldhamstocks."

"Naethin' o' that up here! Lord save us, we're jes fu' o't every Sabbath."

This was getting a little uncanny, for there was no stained glass window in Oldhamstocks kirk, nor, I think, had it been reseated in the Anglican fashion, and the pulpit shifted, as has been done in some country churches; while the edifice itself was absolutely above reproach from this staunch Covenanter's point of view.

"What is the name of the minister?" I asked.

'He's a mon they ca'——"

Now, in the south this would merely indicate that the parson was a stranger recently inducted, and that the spokesman took his name on hearsay, as having somewhat less than no interest in the newcomer. But this frequent idiom of the common folk in Scotland, "they ca' him," in answer to such a query as the above one of mine, and in reference to a man they have perhaps known all their lives, has surely an element of humour in it. It would be straining a point perhaps

to say that it was the proverbial reluctance of the Scot to commit himself definitely, and that without the knowledge of a man's genealogy there could be no positive certainty there had not been some remote hanky-panky with his patronymic. The respected, and, I believe, entirely orthodox divine in question had, it transpired, been thirty or forty years in charge. To cut our discussion short—which is more than my log-bearing friend did, for he kept it up all through the village, and for some distance beyond, as our respective ways coincided—it seems that he scented some taint of " justification by works " in the parish pulpit—an appalling doctrine to his thinking. How this amiable tolerance savoured of the scarlet woman, I cannot imagine. But then I am not equipped to fathom the controversial depths of the old-fashioned Scottish theologian. One may appreciate the piquancy he has given to Scottish history, and feel that he has, at any rate, made nearly two centuries of what otherwise a Scotsman will admit with certain notable exceptions to be a rather wearisomely turbulent chronicle, a very interesting one. All this may be gratefully realised without being competent to enter the lists with a village Cameronian, even though weighted down by half a tree. However, my Covenanter was not so dour as might be gathered from this brief narration. For he laughed quite immoderately at some trifling passage we had, as our ways diverged, and we parted friends, though I suspect he took me for a " Roman."

The rolling plain of East Lothian begins at Pease Pass and Cockburnspath in a narrow strip between the sea and the hills, and gradually expands in fanlike shape as you travel westward in the direction of Edinburgh. This is a country with a character entirely of its own. It is unlike any other in Scotland, and still

more unlike, it would be superfluous to add, any region of England. It might be likened to a vast garden lying between a rocky, broken coastline and a wild waste of moor. Not a garden country in the sense of Kent or the Isle of Wight, to quote familiar illustrations of a hackneyed term; nothing in atmosphere, traditions, or surface, could be more utterly different. There are no lush hedgerows, no flowery lanes, no

The Pease Mouth, with Mill.

picturesque, unkempt orchards, no crooked lines. It is a garden of twenty- or thirty-acre fields geometrically laid out and divided by well-built stone walls or low clipped thorn fences, upon either side of which no foot of space is given to the unprofitable or the picturesque in nature. Turnips, barley, seeds, oats, potatoes, wheat, as the old rhythmical *memoria technica* of the East Lothian six-course shift had it, may be roughly taken as indicating the composition of the rich-coloured patchwork that lays along the levels and climbs the low hills.

At intervals stand the great farm steadings, bearing to one another a certain family likeness not common in the south, and giving an appearance of formality which is strengthened by the tall unlovely chimneys of the stationary engines, though somewhat ameliorated on the other hand by the warm red sandstone walls and red-tiled roofs of the out-buildings and cottages. Here and there—and this bird's-eye view of the country comes natural, for the sufficient reason that you can see nearly all over it from almost any slight elevation—are the great country seats, which are on a scale proportionate to the high-rented, scientifically-cultivated farms belonging to them, entrenched within luxuriant woodlands and green parks that are virtually the only permanent grass in the country. The Merse is a fat and opulent region; but this is a step higher, and cast, moreover, in a different setting. What sort of appeal it would make to a stranger turned suddenly loose into it, and conducted at a leisurely pace from Cockburnspath to Dunbar, and on to Haddington or North Berwick, it would be difficult to say. He would be a cockney indeed, however, who did not recognise the fact that he was looking over a type of rural landscape, the like of which he had assuredly never seen before. A farmer from Norfolk, Lincolnshire, or the best of Yorkshire, would become conscious at once that his standards of excellence were shattered and required readjustment.

The shock of surprise, for the term is no whit too strong, would be modified something, to be sure, by an approach through the Merse, but there is no reason to consider unlikely suppositions. It has been my occasional lot to be in the company of visitors of this type, undergoing this altogether new experience, and still oftener to hear it recalled by such in distant counties

as the experience of their lives. The farmer of Norfolk or Lincolnshire, who, speaking broadly, represented the most enlightened type of English agriculturist when skill and capital worked in fearless and secure combination, occasionally visited this country. But the Norfolk or Lincolnshire farmer threw up the sponge at once at the very first glance at East Lothian, and frankly recognised that a gap divided it from the best that he could show or had ever seen. The simple fact that men of skill, substance, and capital were paying four and five pounds an acre rent, while he was paying two and three for the best land, with about the same profits in either case, would alone have given the crack farmer from the south something to think about. Yet in the eighteenth century the Lothian lairds were importing English bailiffs, under no little opposition, to show their reluctant and comparatively backward tenantry how to farm! As already remarked, a professional equipment is quite unnecessary for a general appreciation of these conditions. A layman with eyes in his head and an ordinary acquaintance with country life would recognise at once an unwonted spectacle, and would surely be compelled to some measure of admiration. For if the breed who made the country have mostly left the soil, and their places know them no more, their successors nobly cherish their great traditions. The economic world has been turned upside down since their day. The financial readjustment which enables the man of the present to withstand the altered conditions does not for the moment concern us. It is enough that East Lothian displays the same wonderful face as of old. The superficial changes are insignificant. Even the drop in these high rents is as nothing to the slump that has overtaken the far lower ones in some of the crack counties of England.

The normal reader will have probably made up his mind by this time that East Lothian, for the normal visitor, must be an intolerably dull county; and in a nation such as we are now, it would be futile to expect

Cockburnspath Tower.

many people to find compensation in the highest triumphs of agriculture, or to appreciate the unique exhibition of them that are here displayed. But as a matter of fact, this perfection of neatness and abundance doesn't altogether make for the monotony which would be inevitable in many countries. The layman, oblivious

to all these things, could not forbear, if he had a soul within him, from recognising a country that in other ways, too, was of an uncommon quality. Stand almost where you will, the eye ranges far away over the rich clean patchwork of the plains, with their intervals of stately woodland, to blue stretches of sea, bounded by long billowy coastlines, rising at times almost to the height of mountains. And again, if the formal opulence of the foregrounds offend an æsthetic sense not capable —speaking without offence—of feeling their significance, the continuous presence of the unbroken wall of lonely moorland, that for the entire length of the county upon the inland side waves along the near skyline, from its very contrast must make a further appeal.

Once over the deep woody deans of Cockburnspath, everything that is wild, bosky, or rugged in nature forges away with the Lammermoors, and you are at once into the narrow eastern wedge of East Lothian, which widens gradually as you approach Dunbar. This is the cream of the country—probably the cream of the earth. For some fifteen miles approximately, extending lengthwise to the course of the Tyne, and in width from the edge of the red cliffs or sandy dunes which succeed them, to the foothills of the Lammermoors, lie the famous "Dunbar red lands." Brilliant to the eye in hue, and brilliant in the rich colouring of the crops they carry, these red loams are supposed to combine a maximum of fertility with friable, easy-working qualities in greater perfection than any other soil in Great Britain. Upon the top of this, they have been subjected to the lavish and liberal treatment of the Lothian tradition, which was not due to natural advantages, but has handled this whole country, whatever its varying soil qualities, which are many, with the same skill. But the red land country of Dunbar,

associated for obvious geographical reasons with that ancient town, is from an agricultural point of view the most interesting portion of the county. I think it is otherwise the most picturesque. For the colouring of itself is so rich, the woodlands of country seats so abundant, the sea so near upon the one hand, the rising ridges of the Lammermoors foothills so reasonably close upon the other.

In matters material the potato is here king. That invaluable but prosaic root suggests to most of us a host of little market gardeners covering the country-side with mean dwellings and makeshift out-buildings. The potato of the Dunbar country is a magnificent creature of quite aristocratic associations, and is something of a gamble to big farmers, just as hops are to the farmers of Kent. It doesn't condescend to the two- or three-acre strips or patches with which it is hopelessly associated in the popular eye. It follows oats (generally) in the ordinary farming shift, and, stimulated by powerful doses of fertiliser, barn-yard and artificial, spreads a level sea of lusty shaws and flowery tops in summer-time from fence to fence, to make way in autumn for a crop of wheat that I have known myself go to eight quarters an acre. And a crop like that was worth something in Haddington when the price was from fifty to sixty shillings a quarter! Even at the present miserable prices, the normal expectation of six quarters which East Lothian looks for in a fair year must leave a margin.

Just after the beautifully clean stubbles had been cleared of their crop in this particular year, I took the trouble to count the freshly-erected grain stacks in three consecutive homesteads, all within easy sight, near the road between Dunbar and Cockburnspath. In one there were just a hundred, and in the two others between

sixty and seventy apiece. The swedes and turnips, which as of old, in the six-course system, generally follow wheat, are a goodly sight, clean as a garden, and the roots, when matured, seeming at times almost to jostle one another out of the drills. This is a dry climate, in spite of the hills and mountains that are visible near and far from these Lothian fields. To an eye accustomed to noting the crops in many counties year after year, it seemed strange to find in mid-July the farmers of the Merse and Lothian crying for rain after weeks of drought, yet their swedes and earlier-sown turnips flickering strong and lusty in the wind over the large fields, and much fitter, indeed, to hold birds than many a southern root field in early September. No waste ground is here—neither open ditches, nor rambling fences, nor tousely corners, nor ragged headlands, and, generally speaking, no hedgerow timber to draw the land and obstruct the sunshine. The crop pushes stiff and level up to the stone wall or trim thorn fence, which in the growing and maturing season subside into thin faint lines hardly discernible amid the lush abundance. But potatoes throughout East Lothian, and above all in these Dunbar red lands, as already related, were and are the most attractive crop to the farmer. Other products have their limitation in market price, being forced to compete with the cheaply grown stuff from the virgin soils of three other continents. It may be worth reminding some readers, too, that the good average and profitable yield of a Manitoba farm would be accounted a dead failure in East Lothian, and scarcely profitable in Wiltshire or Suffolk, while the average yield per acre in Australia or the United States would be ploughed under ruthlessly either in England or Scotland.

But potatoes cannot be carried about the world so

readily, nor grown wholesale with a trifling expenditure of labour. For they need a great deal, and it might be set down as against the Lothian and Berwickshire farmer that the price of labour has gone up enormously since the last generation tilled these generous fields—that of men about 40 per cent., and of women twice as much. Forty years ago, too, the "Dunbar regent," the favourite of that day, held the London eating-houses and supper-rooms in the hollow of its hand, and fetched double, or nearly double, the price of any other late potatoes grown in Great Britain. There are still none in the market comparable to the delicate mealy product of this red loam belt of East Lothian. But the old exclusive prices and the particular demand which created them have passed away, and it only tops the market by some 10 or 15 per cent. But the average under potatoes is fully as large as ever, while wheat has given way greatly to oats and barley. The profits in a good year, unlike grain, still mean money in the *commercial*, not the agricultural sense of the word. Potatoes are, of course, something of a gamble, for potential disease always hovers over the crop like a destroying angel. When dreary wet days follow one another in August, the ominous, pungent odour as surely begins to scent the air, telling of mischief that will spread apace if the elements remain perverse, and of thousands of pounds sinking surely into the soil, which has been manured and fertilised with a lavishness that would make a Devonshire farmer gape with amazement. I mention the Devonshire farmer, not because he also ploughs the red sandstone, on the little fields wedged in between his portentous bank fences, but because—what no one would be altogether surprised at who knew the county—he foots the list of English shires in the official returns of grain per acre.

The old farming families have for the most part left East Lothian. They have not, dear readers, gone to Canada, though I have no doubt the labourers have done their share in swelling the prodigious army of fit and unfit that have crowded the Atlantic steamers for the last dozen years. The East Lothian farmer proper was not the type of person who would look upon a half-section in the north-west, and a "shack" or even a four-roomed frame house, combined with twelve or fourteen hours a day manual labour, as a fine opening. He was a gentleman who dealt, as his successors doubtless do, in thousands—to his profit in former days, if to his loss in the 'eighties and early 'nineties. He frequently paid a rent of £2000 a year. He did not, as his successors doubtless do not, enter upon a farm, and would not have been accepted in the competition of those days, without a capital of many thousand pounds. He often put two or three sons into farms requiring five or six thousand pounds (£12 an acre was about the minimum estimate) for the stocking thereof. There was a great debacle amongst this admirable race of men in the 'eighties and earlier 'nineties, the stock whose forbears had made this country a world's spectacle—the agricultural world, that is—and who in their own persons were farming nobly. The long leases at high rents hitherto equitable, caught many in the great slump. Nobody foresaw it, though they ought to have. Neither landlords, lawyers, agents, nor farmers in Scotland or in England could see the writing on the wall that was plain almost to a schoolboy who knew North America—the first and most powerful source of attack in the 'seventies. That British land would be worth so much an acre till kingdom come, was almost a religion among the shrewdest men in both kingdoms. The present generation, whom a bitter experience has

utterly divorced from the creed of their fathers, cannot imagine the pride and confidence in British real estate that was ingrained in the very blood. The shrewdest lawyers bought land, or invested their clients' money in it, with infinitely more confidence than they would buy Consols to-day, which is not, perhaps, saying very much. Here is a trifling but pertinent incident : its unavoidable egotism I may be forgiven. I was paying a flying visit towards the end of the 'seventies to an old friend, son of a famous farming family, then sitting himself on a superb farm of Dunbar red land at five pounds an acre. I was then farming myself in one of the old states of America, where the spectre of the rapidly-opening West, and its virgin grainfields, was already beginning to flap its wings, and to depreciate land, and to depress the rural communities with the certain promise of worse things to come. The agricultural situation of the two countries, the old long-established regions of the United States, and of Canada too for that matter, on one side of the ocean, and Great Britain on the other, was practically identical. Their farmers, too, had had their day, and being always owners, their pride of land, so far as the sense of its security, is implied. But the first whiff of the impending storm, from which they have never to this day recovered, had already begun to ruffle the calm of the yeomen landowners from Maine to Maryland, and to depress the incipient, but sanguine efforts to restore the fertility of the worn-out plantations of the slave states. It was only a question of more railroads and more steamers, which were both making ready response to the awakening of the Virgin West. Any one nearer to the quarter whence the storm was coming could see it—man, woman, or child. Indeed they were feeling it. The agriculturist sowing grain on his well-equipped farm in New York or Pennsylvania

worth £30 an acre, as sound value hitherto as a staple investment, and as profitable to work as a farm in Essex, had already cause to be anxious. But Great Britain, despite the warnings of occasional newspaper correspondents, seemed absolutely unconscious of any impending calamity. People were bewailing one or two ruinously inclement seasons, as if that were all! On the occasion the memory of which has provoked the parenthesis, I ventured prophetic utterance merely to what was obvious to any one then living within the mutterings of the brewing storm. My friend is now kind enough to say that it stuck in his mind, and was recalled when the crash came. At the time, I think, he relit his pipe and smiled grimly across the hearth. Seven or eight years later, farms known to me in Essex and Lincolnshire with a former rental of 30s. to £2 an acre, were selling or being vainly offered at £10 to £15 an acre in fee simple, and hundreds throughout England were derelict.

It is needless to recall that in spite of slow and partial recovery, and in places through changed conditions, complete recuperation, the blow was final. For better or for worse, that is to say, rural England and Scotland have never been what they were before. That chapter, with its pride, its security, its traditions, one might almost say its arrogance, was definitely closed. This is, of course, a mere truism. But it is pleasant to remember those old days all the same. There was a something not easy to describe in country life that has never returned. It crumbled away in the 'eighties; and what must have struck, and did strike many at the time, was the difficulty with which a kind of superstition that land must represent so much an acre died even in the face of facts. This was obviously due to the long divorcement of landlords, in Great Britain

more than in almost any other country, from a sensitive partnership in the soil, and a practical knowledge of and interest in agriculture. Large estates and a capitalist tenantry had everywhere relieved them from such practical intimacy with their own acres. After all, a love of country life as represented largely by sport, has little really to do with practical agriculture, though it is often conventionally associated with it. To landlords, agents, and solicitors, land had been so long merely represented by a money rent, and the fee simple value at so many years' purchase of the same, that the original partnership idea had been lost sight of. The revolution was too sudden for breaking an ingrained attitude. It was not only that they did not foresee it, which they ought to have done: but after it had come they were even still inclined to discuss rental figures as based on old practice, instead of facing the fact of the world's movements and markets. It is perhaps not surprising that a decade was hardly sufficient to break an immemorial belief that the soil of Great Britain was almost sacred, and that a temporary 10 per cent. reduction was sufficient to stem a cataclysm.

The splendid condition of Lothian agriculture, its long leases and high rents, cut both ways. Whatever befell the sitting tenants, the old farming families, the capitalists of those days, there were sanguine people ready to take their places at rents not seriously reduced, on farms so well equipped and in such beautiful condition. No derelict farms ever marred the landscape of East Lothian. On the contrary, whatever hearts or pockets were breaking, the country kept a smiling face. It is no place here, even were I competent to do so, to touch upon the tale of loss and trouble that must for years have depressed the farmhouses of East Lothian. That most of these old families vanished in

the process need not of necessity indicate financial ruin. Their sons were well-educated, practical men. Farming had been a pleasant and reasonably profitable business at 8 or 10 per cent. The big farmer was a man widely envied in those days. There was even something of a social glamour about it. But it became a very different matter when the woes of the farmer and the landowner became a chronic national refrain, and the position dropped from one of profitable and otherwise enviable ease to an anxious struggle to make both ends meet. It would have been strange indeed if the young men who saw this struggle at close quarters elected, with the world before them, to continue in so unpromising a career, and it is not surprising that commerce and the professions drew away from East Lothian and its neighbours—but I think particularly from East Lothian—most of the names with which its rise to fame is associated.

These are days of totally different standards, days of readjustment, and incidentally, too, of faddists innumerable—days too, let us hope, of more cheering prospects, though the proud old times of agriculture and of landowning too, as such, have utterly vanished. East Lothian, save for this departed glamour, goes on almost precisely as of yore. The rents are now only down about 15 per cent. The rents of some arable counties are down from 50 to 200 per cent.

Away from the hills East Lothian had, in my youth, not a single field but the laird's parks in permanent pasture. At least so it was said, and I certainly never saw one. It has even now so little meadow as to be unworthy of notice. It is still, as I have said, beautifully farmed, and presents a perfect picture. Though showing considerable variety of soil, nature has intended it for an arable country, just as she has intended others

to be mainly grazing countries, not because they are poor, but because they are richer in the value of their beef and mutton than they ever could be in grain. In former days there was tremendous competition for East Lothian farms. Speaking generally, there was no sentiment attaching to the particular homesteads as in most parts of England then. The farming families took a commercial view of the situation, and put their capital, when a lease was up, wherever the best opportunity offered, and not infrequently into more than one farm. The mutual attitude of landlord and tenant, again, struck a southerner in those days as almost wholly lacking in what might be called the quasi-feudal flavour, traditional in England, and, no doubt, in some other parts of Scotland. The tie was of a merely commercial nature—a nineteen-year hard-and-fast lease, and there was an end of it. The Lothian landlords may well have been proud of their tenantry. But the mutual feeling, though generally friendly, was not in the least feudal, to use a convenient term, and in no sense intimate. I don't think home farms had any appreciable existence. At any rate, one never heard of them as counting for anything. It would have needed an exceptional indifference to income to play with three hundred acres, which would otherwise represent a clear thousand and odd pounds; while the notion of setting a good example, admirable perhaps in more backward countries, would have been, of course, ridiculous in East Lothian.

I remember very well, and for excellent reasons, an incident which made a great stir at the time throughout Great Britain: but I find it quite forgotten, even in the locality, or rather that there is scarcely any one left to remember it. Long protracted tenure and its consequent local attachments were not entirely wanting,

though, as I have ventured to indicate, they were not characteristic of the county in the 'seventies. But a distinguished farmer in a case where these conditions did happen to exist in a very marked degree was given notice to quit at the end of his lease for political reasons. There was a tremendous row, not in any way promoted by the party most concerned, who was of a proud and quiet disposition. But the press of the United Kingdom, not then prone to sensationalism, took it up, and even that of the Continent, whose agriculturists in those days, regarding Great Britain as their model, and East Lothian as its apotheosis, echoed the controversy.

The offending landlord was a Tory with stout convictions of a kind not uncommon then, but which would make the hair of the staunchest Conservative of to-day stand on end. The tenant was a Liberal of the mild kind which then answered to the term, but who, if he were alive to-day, would almost certainly be of the other faith. His particular offence lay in having contested, though unsuccessfully, a Scottish constituency. Even foreigners wrote indignant letters to the British Press to the effect that Mr. A., the aggrieved party, and his farm had a European reputation, whereas they had never even so much as heard of Mr. B., his landlord. This was natural enough, though not quite to the point, nor precisely in perspective, as the gentleman in question, an otherwise just and upright man, had actually held office in a former Government. However, it was a nine days' wonder, and stirred political passions no little for the moment. Agricultural politics in those days hinged mainly upon the law of hypothec and the extreme preservation of hares. The former, abrogated in due course, gave the landlord certain preferential rights over all other creditors, which were considered harsh and otherwise disadvantageous to

the tenant. The latter was really a great scandal. The fields in some parts were literally covered with half-tame hares. To say that on a fine autumn day

An East Lothian "Worker."

you could count thirty and forty squatting about a clean stubble field of less than that number of acres is the mere literal truth. The damage such a number did to the noble fields of turnips by nibbling at the tubers and setting up decay, seemed in common sense out of all proportion to the sorry sport afforded by a multi-

plicity of ground game. East Lothian, like much of Scotland, was and is a fine partridge country, but nothing can make a hare in a serious and wholesale sense an exhilarating mark for the gun; while of all a gun's victims poor puss suffers most from the tinker and the tailor, the long-range blazer and the schoolboy.

A keeper in Shropshire I was constantly out with many years ago, an admirable type of his class, served his early terms on a famous shooting estate in Norfolk. He has often told me that if the list of hares slain on a big day did not reach four figures, there was a rating in store for the keepers. The modern shooting man, if he does not live laborious days, is critical as to the class of shot offered him, and may well wonder what his predecessors could have seen in this sort of fun—at the cost, too, of so much justifiable ill-feeling. But it brought on the Hares and Rabbits Bill, which has so thinned the former, save on the Wiltshire Downs and a few other spots, that there are not much more than enough of them for coursing and hunting, the proper *métier*, perhaps, of this graceful, fleet, and timorous beast. But mingling in rather odd contrast with the confiding game, both fur and feather, that swarmed on these fat Lothian fields in autumn and winter, came the constant rush of the wilder denizens of the air—the freer spirits from the moorland and the sea. Great flocks of wild geese spent, and I believe still spend, every day for months upon the young wheat or seeds, particularly appreciating the leavings of the lifting ploughs on the cleared or re-sown potato-fields. Honking inland in the morning and back again to the seashore at sunset, a big flock of wild geese would be almost as continuously in evidence as the partridges or hares, or the clouds of pigeons which, pouring out of the various "doo'cots" in the neighbourhood, were another characteristic feature

of the East Lothian landscape. There, however, the similarity ended. For the genius with which a hundred or so wild geese mingled daily in the bustling life of a great farm, and yet kept themselves practically unapproachable by the most crafty sportsman, was amazing. Golden plovers, too, seemed always on the wing at dusk in these darker months with their plaintive whistle, while there were more wood-pigeons in East Lothian in those days than in any country I have ever seen, which is saying a good deal.

CHAPTER XI

ROUND ABOUT DUNBAR

As the road draws near Dunbar it crosses a fair-sized burn, which at once disappears into the policies of Broxmouth, the Duke of Roxburgh's seat, whence issuing from beneath the high park wall on the further side, it runs at once into the sea, forming a time-honoured hazard on the town golf links. This is the Brock or Brox burn, that played a strategic part, and doubtless ran red with blood at the battle of Dunbar, which in 1650 was fought upon this very spot. Charles II., it may or may not be remembered, had been crowned King of Scotland immediately after the execution of his father—not in any spasm of passionate loyalty, but quite the reverse. The Scottish nation were then even more stoutly opposed to the Stuarts and their ways than their neighbours, and from their point of view had perhaps more cause to be. They were firmly convinced that their religion, in its Presbyterian form of expression, was of divine origin, and that the Almighty had made a special covenant with them as His chosen agents, not merely to serve as a shining example to the nations of the Reformed faith, but to enforce it either by persuasion or the sword, on such of their neighbours as they could reach with either. Toleration of any kind was anathema. But Charles II. was the only alternative to falling politically under the now powerful English Government, an eventuality as distasteful to the secular pride of the nation, as any form of creed

but their own was hateful to their robust religious fanaticism. Charles at this moment had been some two months in Scotland—the squarest peg in the roundest hole that could be found in the chronicles of all the kings. It simplified matters something, however, that the young man was maintained practically as a dummy under the strict surveillance of guardians, lay and clerical, representing everything that his impious soul most abhorred. They in their turn privately regarded him as an unclean and malignant instrument, a veritable son of Belial, whom the servants of the Lord were unfortunately compelled to make use of in furthering the designs of Heaven. Purged of all his familiars good and bad, he was virtually a prisoner. If not enclosed in prison walls, the social atmosphere of the saints, to whose exhortations he was handed over, must have been fully as stifling. The historic *malade du pays* of Queen Mary on first exchanging France for Holyrood must have been trifling to the gloom of her great-grandson under somewhat similar circumstances, deprived of those cakes and ale which alone comprised his scheme of life, and thundered at by long-winded divines with scarcely any pretension of respect. With his tongue in his cheek, however, he signed the Covenant, there being no alternative, and put his name to papers embodying everything he most loathed. Among other things he subscribed to the fact that he was "deeply humbled and afflicted in spirit before God, because of his father's opposition to the work of God." After which even this sardonic humorist was moved to remark that he could never look his mother in the face again. No doubt he was clever enough in his way, and philosophic enough to find some consolation in the hope of better times to come. We all know how such dreams, if he had them, were more than fulfilled; what a fine innings

he had from his own rather sordid point of view, and how ruthlessly he took it out of the saints with his packed parliaments, his bishops, and the sword of Claverhouse.

But the saints were paramount at the time of Dunbar, for the simple reason that the moderates of all kinds saw no safety for Scotland but in combination. All this business very naturally brought Cromwell hot-foot to Scotland with his Ironsides. He had some hopes of smoothing his path by pious appeals to brother Calvinists, which to our latter-day notions seem much to the purpose. But to the godly of the Covenant the Anabaptist and Independent saints of the south, who had rejected the Presbyterian form of theocracy, were as unredeemed sons of Belial as any Papist or Mahomedan. Cromwell's scriptural appeal to all God's elect in Scotland to unite with the chosen from south of the Tweed fell on deaf ears, while the hatred of the "Auld Enemy" had abated little or nothing.

Cromwell's army entered Scotland from Berwick late in July, and, as elsewhere mentioned, traversed the Pease Pass, and, following the present route of road and rail travel, arrived in due course before Edinburgh. It consisted of 16,000 men, including 5000 horse, and was supported by an accompanying fleet. For a wet and stormy month Cromwell was held in check by the skilful Leslie and a Scottish army of 26,000 men, till after manœuvres and counter-manœuvres, and the loss of 5000 of his small but fine army, mainly from sickness, he found himself back at Dunbar in an extremely awkward predicament. Leslie's policy had been to avoid a pitched battle, and it had answered admirably. Cromwell had offered him battle at Haddington on ground of his own choosing, which the astute Scottish general had declined. But he stuck

to the heels of the English, and was now encamped upon Doon Hill, an outlier of the Lammermoors, which rises nearly 500 feet out of the red East Lothian fields, about a mile from the spot where we are now in fancy standing.

The Scottish army were now between Cromwell and his difficult line of retreat through the Pease Pass, and would have made even his escape by sea no easy matter. But Leslie had his difficulties too, of which the now ascendant ministers were unquestionably the worst. A purging of his army on the lines of theological opinion had been insisted upon at Edinburgh in face of this redoubtable foe, with the result that some three to four thousand of some nine thousand efficient men and officers had been summarily ejected. A further expulsion of "malignant suspects" was now insisted upon. According to a Royalist writer, the army was left in charge of "ministers' sons, clerks, and other such sanctified creatures, who had hardly ever seen or heard of any sword, but that of the spirit." This purging went on till the very eve of the battle. Cromwell's saints, on the other hand, were probably the best troops at that time in the world, but they were less than half their opponents in numbers, and still sickening fast. The Scots on Doon Hill were in no very good plight, for it was raining heavily; but their position was virtually impregnable. Cromwell saw this well enough, and recognised how precarious was his own.

He was lodged at Broxmouth House, and had called his rather despondent officers to that strange blend of prayer meeting and council of war which preceded so many of his trenchant efforts against Amalekites of all kinds. He alone apparently, "and he often loved to talk of it afterwards," says Burnet, "felt a strange enlargement of heart, and that God had certainly heard them." He and his staff were walking in the garden

afterwards, and watching the Scottish camp through their glasses, when to their amazement and delight they saw the enemy preparing to descend the hill, which they subsequently did, to take up a position between its foot and the Brox burn. Every one knows how Cromwell took his glass from his eye with the laconic and historic remark, "God hath delivered them into our hands; they are coming down to us." The ministers seem to have been the evil genius of this fatal movement, made against the judgment, it is said, of Leslie himself, and the veteran Leven, who was with him. But the preachers were having their day, and were as ready to take command against Cromwell as against the invisible legions of Satan. Further exhorting on the hilltop had worked them up into a state of ecstatic confidence in which mere earthly tactics were of slight consideration. They had the divine assurance, they told the army, of victory. In short, their spiritual wrestlings had reduced the issue to a certainty. On the eve of any other battle in credible history, such a company would have been laid by the heels as intolerably meddlesome lunatics. But in the atmosphere they had created Leslie was overborne. Cromwell himself could personate a Hebrew prophet with the best of them, which adds irony to the situation, with the difference that he dropped the part when it came to business, and became a soldier and a statesman.

It had rained all night, and about daybreak Cromwell's bugles sounded the advance. A regiment of horse, and two regiments of infantry crossed the burn with some opposition, and were followed by the whole army, when without loss of time a general attack was delivered. Two Scottish regiments made a brave resistance and were killed to a man where they stood, but the rest of the host broke almost at once before the

onset of Cromwell's horse and foot, and as the sun rose the battle had already melted into a general rout. "Let God arise and His enemies be scattered," exclaimed Cromwell, and the pursuit began. Of 23,000 Scots, 3000 were slain, and 10,000 taken prisoners. The latter, like those of Worcester, "the crowning mercy," fought on the very same day in the next year, were herded together, driven south under cruel conditions, which greatly reduced their numbers, and shipped to the American plantations. The victory at Dunbar gave Cromwell the possession of Edinburgh. It broke up the domination of the religious extremists, released Charles, who retired north from their clutches, and brought about an alliance between the moderates headed by Argyle and the old Royalists of the more northern counties and elsewhere, under the king who had been crowned at Scone.

Through the first half of 1651, Cromwell, in possession of the country up to Edinburgh, was pressing Charles and the Scottish army to the northward. How the latter, being hard pushed, eventually made a rush southward, hoping to raise the English Royalists, was followed by Cromwell, and then caught and crushed at Worcester on the anniversary of Dunbar, is a more familiar story. It is only relevant here as illustrating the importance of the victory on this mile of tillage land between the Brox burn and Doon hill, where the infatuated saints had forced Leslie to take up such a fatal position.

The royal borough and seaport of Dunbar has smartened up amazingly since my earlier acquaintance with it, which was fairly intimate. It knew little, I think, in those days, of a summer season, though possibly it had already found room for a few visitors from Edinburgh. So famous a place historically, where

then, too, more regularly than now, with all its newly acquired fashion, the northern fast trains halted, could not be insignificant. But it wore, I well remember, a rather dead-alive look, hardly worthy of that great and prosperous country around it, which made Haddington such a stirring place on market days. The latter has now fallen from its high estate, while Dunbar has expanded westward in streets, and rows, and terraces, and beyond these into private villas, that bear ample testimony to the success of its later aspirations. The broad, straight, cobbled High Street, with its tall, rather grim old-fashioned houses, has changed nowise, however, save for the greater bustle that rattles and echoes along it. The quaint old gabled town-hall, with its hexagonal tower and extinguisher spire, still remains. So does the huge barrack-looking house at the end, once the mansion of the Earls of Lauderdale, and afterwards, what its appearance suggests, a military barracks. The old fishing quarters towards the harbour have altered little, and are picturesque enough if you can attune yourself to the asperity of appearance which is almost inseparable from all northern dwellings of the humbler urban sort. In former days, it seemed to me that one's horse's feet upon the cobbles used to wake the echoes of as quiet a place as might be found. From a recently renewed acquaintance, it comes back to memory as a lively hubbub of motors, and traps, and cycles, and quite a stir of pedestrians, local and alien.

But the face of East Lothian, fat plain or wild moor, has altered nothing. Its farms, mansions, villages, and cottages are in detail and appearance precisely as they were during the Franco-Prussian war—almost pathetically so to those who can remember what these same fields and buildings then stood for, the

agricultural high-water mark of a proud, envied, uncriticised, landed system. And now in spite of the apparent paradox, and of having passed in the interlude through the fiery furnace, such as the passing stranger would little dream of, they still represent the high-water mark of the system, now a discredited one, unduly and hastily discredited beyond a doubt. But that is neither here nor there, and is inevitable in a shop-keeping country, where the bulk of the educated and articulate class are utterly divorced from any practical knowledge of the soil. And surely over nothing else in the world can an otherwise clever and able man make such a complete fool of himself, and remain so long a fool, and do so much harm if he has the chance as in the apparently simple but the infinitely intricate science of rural economy.

The small farm, rightly or wrongly, is now the popular prescription for the ills of a congested little island that has cultivated shop-keeping and bricks and mortar, and imported food so assiduously that its soil area has become insignificant for its monstrous population. Relief, so far as it goes, is obviously of infinite interest, whatever the soundness of the prescription. But what does this last amount to ? The increase of the population of Great Britain in one single year, would numerically neutralise a movement back on to the land, upon a scale such as the most sanguine theorists with a normal sense of proportion have not ventured upon. Whether East Lothian could carry more people I do not know ; but no one with eyes in his head could so much as look at it and imagine that under a patchy system it would produce as much per acre to the wealth of the country as it does to-day, with high rents, high wages, high yields, and, let us hope, reasonable profits. To hand over such a country as this, with all the further

outlay involved, to the tender mercies of the small cultivator with practically no capital, would surely be fatuous. At any rate, large farming, landlordism, and all the rest of it, is a more or less vaguely discredited system nowadays, by that outside element, which is not equipped for judgment, though unfortunately for the country, or for any country, by far the most numerous. British agriculture is very generally supposed to be decadent, regardless, or more often unconscious of the elementary fact that we still grow more grain per acre than any country in the world, and that our farmers as stock-breeders easily lead the world. Misconceptions are natural enough when there are otherwise sane people prepared to tell an audience quite ignorant of these things, that if a field is in grass instead of in wheat, it represents a kind of conspiracy to defraud the people of their food, and who honestly believe a flock of sheep to be useless interlopers, to the exclusion of humanity! I wonder what proportion of the British nation would be genuinely surprised to learn that sheep are a vital ingredient of the machinery through which the "people's food" can be grown in this country. Rightly or wrongly, the great farmer is out in the shade, nor any longer accounted an object of pride to every true Briton as a peculiarly British institution. There is a fixed notion in towns and cities that he and his capital, and his labourers, could be advantageously supplanted by the small farmer. As "occupiers" only, say the Radicals, as ownership might spell Toryism; as owners, say the Conservatives, who must go with the stream, for that very reason. In the counties of Great Britain traditionally occupied by small farmers, with trifling exceptions there you find the most unproductive land and inferior live-stock, which last is equivalent to waste. They may be happy,

but they are generally bad farmers. If this were not sufficiently obvious, the sceptical can purchase for fourpence the annual official returns per acre of every county, where the facts are writ large. As to the contrast in live-stock, it is written on the face of the country sufficiently clearly for any one who runs to read. In conclusion, it would be at least as accurate as epigrammatic to say that, whereas the Dane once came to school in East Lothian, East Lothian, or Great Britain at any rate, is now told to go to school with the Dane. I knew personally in old days, several Danes and Swedes, landowners' sons mostly, sitting at the feet of East Lothian farmers, some of whom must have lived to see the tables turned.

But if the fields of Lothian have altered nothing since then, half the sea-coast is transformed. From Dunbar to North Berwick, and from North Berwick to Gullane and Aberlady, Edinburgh, reinforced to some extent by Glasgow, has stretched an almost continuous chain of habitations. The old quiet nine-hole golf courses of North Berwick, Dunbar, Archerfield, and Gullane, have expanded into nearly a dozen full-length courses, the resort of thousands from all parts of the country, and from across the seas. The fertile farms of East Lothian filter out as they draw near the shore into a thin sandy belt of tillage, which abuts here and there for long distances upon rolling sand dunes and intervening strips of sheep-nibbled turf such as the golfer loves ; and beyond the thin sward and the dunes the sea makes fine play upon red reefs of rock and low rugged promontories and interludes of golden sand. Here in old days the Scottish golfer propelled the feather ball, and later on its gutty successor, with swan-necked clubs, over short courses pretty much as nature had made them but for the mellowing influence

of the tramp of many feet and the brushing of natural greens. The links on which the Dunbar course is laid out fringe the low rocky shore to the east of the town. It seemed strange playing over them again, after such a gulf of years, and vainly endeavouring to recall the less elaborate and much shorter course of primitive times of which the stone wall hazard at "The Vaults" and the Brox burn alone remained as salient features. But the pleasant sea-girt nature of both the out and in journey, the gorgeous colouring of the rocks, the stern headland of St. Abb's, closing the wide outlook to the east, and the old town upon the west;—these, at any rate, required no effort of memory, and I soon abandoned all futile groping after obliterated details upon the eighteen-hole course of to-day.

Dunbar—though even as I write the restless up-to-date golf architect may possibly be at work—would seem to be tacitly acquiesced in as the happy hunting-ground of the duffer, the conservative, and the middling player. The eight to fourteen handicap man finds it a quite sufficient test of his abilities; while the numerous and wholly unambitious remnant can whack round with far less tribulation than upon the stretched-out and bunkered-up courses just to the westward. Dunbar is not for the modern scratch and plus man. It is the pleasant stamping ground rather of that vast majority to whom the great game still offers seductive difficulties apart from mere bunkers—men to whom the full-length drive, according to their capacity and their accuracy of approach, is not yet and never will be reduced to anything like a monotony of precision.

It is only for a small minority that recent golf architecture has any true significance. It merely causes the mass of players to use their niblicks oftener, which in itself is not an advantageous item, or confronts

On the Links, Dunbar.

them with the frequent alternative of playing short after a meritorious shot (for them), or straining at a fluky one. If they cover the mere length and possibly intervening hazard, there is no pretension to any control over the ball when it reaches the much-bunkered green, which in truth is not laid out for such a shot, but for a well-judged one with an iron club by a first-class player from the closer distance at which his longer drive placed his ball. Playing short is all very well, and is, of course, a time-honoured device in the game, but chiefly as the sequel, and in a sense penalty, to an indifferent shot. That is all right. But as a necessary proceeding for the average man, perhaps, several times in a round, if he really wants to win his match, it is not golf. Of course, he much more often doesn't do this, but slashes away freely, and is even secretly pleased, if by an unusual effort he more than succeeds in his length, and runs over the green into the cavernous corner of a bunker beyond. He will almost certainly remark unblushingly to his adversary, that it was bad luck, and the other, who has played short by design or accident, if also only a moderate player, will very likely half agree with him, as with an easy pitch somewhere on to the green, he divides or wins the hole. This again is not golf for either party. The man with the iron club, for whom this hole was laid out, would not bewail his luck if he were bunkered beyond the green, but would simply recognise that he had miserably failed. All this does not seriously matter. But it is a great revolution that all the good courses should be altered to test the play of one-twentieth of the golfing world, to the frequent dislocation of distances for the bulk of it. It is never, of course, the long carries from the tee, which in any case seem to have gone out of fashion, that are beyond the compass of the average

player, but so many of the second shots, which either he cannot attempt at all, or must slash at with the wrong club. This of course detracts, or should detract if he has any regard for the game, just so much from his enjoyment of the round. There probably is no help for the situation. The fatal moment of weakness which let in the American core ball did the whole business. But when one comes to think of it, it is rather a novel idea that nineteen members out of every twenty in a good club play on a course laid out for the odd twentieth.

There used to be a superstition in the south that every Scotsman was a good, or a fairly good, golfer. Even now, I fancy, a majority of southern golfers are quite unaware that the game belonged purely to the east coast of Scotland, and that the men of Dumfries or Ayr, of Glasgow or of the Highlands, speaking broadly, only adopted it recently, as Englishmen have adopted it. So colossal was the artlessness on this point, that at the annual dinner in London of a large club of which the writer was a member in the 'nineties, the ceremony was invariably opened by the solemn perambulation of the banquet hall by a Highlander in full war-paint, playing a skirl on the bagpipes. This was honestly regarded by two hundred educated Englishmen and golfers as symbolically appropriate and suggestive of the royal and ancient and intensely lowland game, and of the atmosphere of St. Andrews, Musselburgh, or North Berwick!

The Scottish golfer of to-day, as is only natural, exhibits the same wide variety and the same average capacity as his English neighbours, the only sensible difference being that the game reaches lower down the social scale, so far, at least, as that is represented by money. It is not necessary in Eastern Scotland, as

in England, to belong to a club, which is unavoidably limited in numbers, and inevitably more or less exclusive. Practically all the old Scottish courses are open to any one who chooses to pay a shilling or two for a day ticket, at a box by the first tee. There are clubs and clubhouses on most links, but a considerable proportion of the players have no connection with them. There are also numbers of golf clubs in Edinburgh and elsewhere, just as there are fishing clubs, who hold their competitions on any course that suits them, or that gives them particular facilities. Dunbar, then, though not accounted a classic course, and held in some scorn by the scratch player, is nevertheless a true sand course, fringing, in fact, the very shore—of quite a good length, too, and well suited to the ordinary performer, for whom it appears in a manner to be set apart. Really bad southern players, when they make their northern pilgrimage in the holiday, generally prefer to swell the crowd upon the classic courses, where they must be as unhappy themselves as a nuisance to others, though, I believe, moral support is to be found in the number of others of the like sort, and the like unaccountable infatuation. But after all, the whole standard of play is enormously raised. The old stock jokes—not the original Scotch ones, but those of the southern boom period—still do duty in the comic papers; but they must emanate from pens and pencils out of touch with present conditions. Red-faced, peppery colonels no longer dig away and blaspheme interminably in bunkers, nor do impossible vulgarians in bizarre attire any longer play the utter imbecile in their caddies' eyes that the belated artist would still have us believe. The suburban courses, and, indeed, most courses, were rich in such spectacles and such incidents ten and twenty years ago. Possibly

August may still provide some humoursome sights, even by the seaside. Perhaps some very provincial courses may still yield up their treasures, but I doubt it. The duffer of to-day, on the stretched-out and bunkered courses, with his consistent sixes and sevens, may try the patience of the pair or foursome behind him, but he is neither bad enough, nor eloquent enough to be funny, and in the near past would have been accounted a quite respectable performer on his comparatively untormented pilgrimage round a southern course. The farcical element, who made copy, and whose phantoms still make copy for the newspapers, have died out or been literally driven from the courses by a new generation of slashing youngsters.

Dunbar in its present condition is adapted to the average type of player, whether young or old. It is quite certain that the better man among them would oftener win on such a green than on a championship course, or its near equivalent, and surely this is a good test. It is not only the occasional holes which tempt the slightly better of two moderates to take risks, which are obviously fluky, rather than play short after a creditable drive, but in some other respects the element of luck is greater in the case of players negotiating a course a good deal of which is beyond both their powers to play—as it is laid out to be played.

Throughout the Middle Ages Dunbar, with its strong castle, its situation upon the sea, and on the landward approach from England, was in the thick of the ceaseless hurly-burly. To touch upon the men of might who flung one another in turn out of its wave-washed walls, would be to list the names of every king, baron, and hero, on either side of Tweed, who assisted in the bloody tale of Scottish history. It gave title to a long succession of earls, who played their part

in the defence of the Eastern March with interludes of alliance with the national foe, when their personal pride was touched, or their private interests served. The reader's interest is much more likely to be engaged by the reminder that Queen Mary came here with Darnley after the Rizzio murder, riding on a palfrey behind Erskine, " who was much missed by the godly." Later on, infatuated or hypnotised by the strong-willed swarthy scoundrel who wrecked her life, she came here with him. For Bothwell then owned Dunbar and many other properties in the county. Here, under these compromising circumstances, he instituted proceedings for the divorce from his wife, Lord Huntly's sister, the only woman, it is said, he ever felt affection and respect for. From Dunbar they returned to Edinburgh, and to that marriage at Holyrood, which was celebrated on May 15th, almost within three months of Darnley's murder in the Kirk o' Field. Driven from the capital by public opinion and the menace of their enemies, the pair were back at Dunbar in three weeks, and in the middle of June marched with such forces as they could raise, to meet the Confederate Lords at Carberry Hill. The agreement there made placed Mary in their hands, and left Bothwell the opportunity to escape with his life, but nothing more.

The end of this unscrupulous and forceful member of the House of Hepburn, the very apotheosis of a type of Scottish baron then drawing to its end, was characteristic and dramatic. The Scottish government made later attempts to catch him, but he seems to have adopted the career of a corsair in the Shetlands, to die eventually in a Danish prison. The castle of Dunbar was soon after dismantled; but in the next century the town was famous for its herring fisheries, and the great number, not only of Scotch, but of Dutch

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vessels that gathered there. The castle is now but a worn, shapeless mass of fragments, seated on rugged red rocks of trap, through which a way has been cut for the sea to surge into the harbour. When it is said that the town in the Napoleon wars, and later, saw a good deal of garrison and military life, and has ever since been a yeomanry and militia centre, there is not much of general interest remaining. The rock

Dunbar Harbour and Castle.

formation along the coast, upon both sides of Dunbar, is beautiful in detail for its vivid colouring, and striking for the jagged, rugged outline, whether of cliff or reef, with which it ceaselessly frets the wonderfully transparent seas. In what high regard it is held among geologists might be guessed at by a glance at the manner in which the various strata of formation are exposed all along the coast: cliffs of trap, ledges of red, white, and yellow sandstone, and slabs of bluish limestone.

There are beds of petrified shells, and corals, and rocks of porphyritic greenstone. There is a good deal of columnar work, too, about the harbour, of a kind similar to that which on a great scale has made Staffa and the Giant's Causeway notorious. West of the castle and harbour are craggy cliffs of trap, succeeded by cliffs, and then by ledges, of red and white sandstone. The large parish church of red sandstone, with its lofty tower and expansive breadths of perpendicular window, stands raised well up at the eastern fringe of the town, and can be seen for miles. This is modern, being not yet a century old, but its predecessor, which was wholly destroyed, seems to have been a cruciform building, largely of twelfth or thirteenth century date, and richly endowed as a collegiate church in the fourteenth century by one of the earls of Dunbar.

Nearly three centuries later the body of George Home, the last Earl of Dunbar, High Treasurer of Scotland, Knight of the Garter, and Privy Councillor to James I. in England, was brought here from London for burial. The only object of interest in the church is his magnificent mural monument, nearly thirty feet high. It is of marble, fashioned with all that lavish wealth of ornamentation which distinguished the tombs of the great, and, in the south, of many who were not great, at that period. The last earl, of life size, robed and in armour, kneels in prayer upon a cushion beneath a lofty and profusely decorated canopy. A life-size mailed figure stands upon a pedestal on either hand, while beneath the frescoed canopy, bearing symbolic figures, an inscription on black marble commemorates this militant agent in the irritating policy of the first and sixth James.

It is a ten-mile stage from Dunbar to Haddington upon the North road, which, pursuing a north-east course

all the way from Berwick to Dunbar, there turns due east, and holds that course for the last thirty miles to Edinburgh. For the first half of the stage to Haddington, road and railway, still in near company, push forward with unswerving precision along an almost level seacoast strip, till both leap in near company the rocky gorge of the Tyne at East Linton, and, for the first time seriously diverging, pursue their several ways to the northern capital. Here, just beyond Dunbar, the estuary of this same East Lothian Tyne takes quite a bite out of the otherwise rock-bound coast. It is the first break of this kind north of Tweed. The water of Biel, whose infant streams amid the woods of Nunraw and Whittinghame we gazed upon from the top of the Lammermoors in a former chapter, here babbles beneath our road into Belhaven Bay, and helps to swell the interval of sand-bars and shallow tides and marshy shore. But the rich red lands, stiff with their clean crops, and for this stage of the road relieved and diversified with groves and woods as opulent as the crops, shut out all actual detail of this low sandy sea-line. Across the heavy-laden grainfields; over the great broad rectangles of potato land, thigh deep in their dark green covering of shaughs; beyond the flickering blue-green tops of the thick clustering swedes, or the paler pastures, where heavy Border Leicesters or their crosses are lazily grazing the rye grass and clover ley and tramping it hard for the autumn ploughing; over such foregrounds, and between the woods, you can mark the indeterminate line of the shore, and the gleam of the sea beyond fading into the famous far-spreading woods of Tynninghame.

The Lammermoors are still but some half-dozen miles from the coast, and into this long wedge what a wealth of rural abundance is crowded. With all its

triumphs of fatness, and astonishing thrift of tillage, this part of East Lothian, and that, too, the richest part, cannot help being in a way beautiful. Even without the overhanging moors striking their ever-present note of contrast on the one hand, and the constant neighbourhood of a rock-fretted sea upon the other, the atmosphere would be a stately and imposing one for the Devonian colouring of the soil, the much more than Devonian colouring of its produce, the variety and opulence of the woods. The surprising assertions here and there, too, of primitive nature, in the shape of upstanding, untamable hills, shaggy with gorse and grey outcropping rock; the murmur here and there of rushing trout-streams, that, as in the Merse, cut their way through bosky glens which have defied the plough, or that the care of some neighbouring country seat have cherished in more than their native beauty. But even so, there is no call whatever to thus cut a picture out of its frame of hills and sea. At any rate, this half of East Lothian, and, in a modified degree, the whole of it, is at least unique. However it might strike the stranger, there is nothing resembling it, taken as a whole, elsewhere in Scotland, and assuredly nothing approaching its equivalent anywhere in England. This pious opinion, I need hardly remark, is not expressed as applying to the ordinary standards of physical scenery, but purely to its aloofness in many characteristics from ordinary landscapes. From Cumberland to Cambridge, or from Derbyshire to Aberdeen, there is no tract of country like it in the sense that all other districts have more or less their prototypes. In most parts of modern Scotland, one has to forego the hundred and one details of landscape, due to mellower conditions and older rural civilisation, a generally softer climate, and, above all, to a less

vigorously economic treatment of the soil, and to find compensation in a rather altered point of view. But East Lothian, its eastern half more particularly, seems to have a quality of its own that even with all its ruthless trimness and fatness of foreground compels one's respectful admiration.

If there is now little continuity of occupation among the tenantry of East Lothian, prodigious as have been their collective achievements within the brief compass of a century, in few countries have the old landed families been less uprooted. Hays and Hepburns, Bairds, Sutties, Kerrs, Kinlochs, and other names of immemorial association are all still here. The *novus homo* seems scarcely in evidence. Small lairds, without doubt, were wiped out by the dozen, during the scientific development of agriculture in the cult of the great estate and the large farm. The small laird of provincial habit and attachments was practically extinct here seventy or eighty years ago. It is a country essentially of big things, of great estates, and long rent-rolls. Many of the farmers in former days were richer men than scores of Welsh and west-country squires.

Close to Linton, by the roadside, stand the ample farm buildings, the well-embowered mansion-house of Phantassie. One of the largest farms in the county—some eight or nine hundred acres of arable land—it was for long associated with the name of the Rennies, one of whom, nearly a century ago, introduced the shorthorn into the Lowlands, while his brother was the famous engineer. Close by, too, lived and died Andrew Meikle, who was the virtual inventor of the threshing machine. East Linton, a rather dour but large and important village, stands upon a high bank above the Tyne, which having sung its winding way through the heart of East Lothian, now draws towards its sober

end. It is making just here its last serious play in a rocky cleft over which the old stone bridge carries the North road into the village. Just above the latter, affording a delightful but momentary glimpse from the train window, as it strides the adjacent viaduct, is a deep green glen, down which, and visible for a long distance upward, comes coursing the bright waters of the river. A felicitous illustration is here of those frequent relapses into untamed Arcady which, as I have said, yield such pleasant surprises, amid the lush, orderly landscape of East Lothian. It struck me also, on revisiting the once familiar spot, as a happy example of the unchanged condition of all this countryside, despite its still unchallenged supremacy in things material. Though adjoining a large village seated on the main railroad, during all these decades nothing up the glen seemed to have altered in the smallest essential detail. The gorse bloomed upon the steep grassy side of the brae unchecked as of yore, and there was the line of well-remembered willows, huge specimens of their kind, that in the first days of the spring trouting made great hopeful splashes of whity-grey against the still wintry woods. With most of us there are scenes that for no conspicuous reason remain always in the foreground of memory; and these noble willows, waving their grey harbingers of spring over the black eddies of the Tyne, black to peculiarity from the nature of the rocky bottom, have come back to me hundreds of times in many lands, and by scores of other streams often far more beautiful. I somehow expected to find them cut down or shrivelled with the weight of years. But there they still were in all their glory, not shaking out on this occasion, to be sure, the catkins of early April, but merging their late summer foliage in the woody background. An old mill higher up the valley, to be

sure, had vanished. So, with the removal of its dam, had the long, still stretch of dead water above it. The river now ran its natural rippling course, and no longer

Hailes Castle.

lingered between brimming banks, beneath the ancient castle of Hailes. For I should not have thus ventured to bring the reader up here, or strained his goodwill perhaps, with these reminiscent philanderings, but for

the saving fact that the hoary ruins of Hailes Castle rise here above the stream, which now ripples between uplifted banks, where it once slept in quiet and brimming depths, and caught the shadows of the red walls and the riotous foliage that chokes them. This was, of old, a fortress of renown. Bothwell once owned it, and local tradition, when I used to come a-fishing up here, held stoutly that he brought Queen Mary hither. This is more than probable, as it lay right in the path between Dunbar and Edinburgh. One used also to be told, however, by the natives, that it was by Traprain Law, which raises its great humpy, rocky shoulder many hundreds of feet in the immediate background, that she fell into the hands of her enemies. The tradition had it that in skirting the hill, as she thought, upon the safe side, it proved the reverse, and so brought her into their very arms. This did well enough, and was accepted and retained with thankfulness by ingenuous youth with an uncritical fancy for such things.

But unhappily it does not march with historical fact, and is only interesting as an example of the curious drift of oral tradition. The ivied fragments of the red sandstone towers of Hailes are high enough to frown above the tangle of ash and willow, and alder and oak, which choke it upon the riverside, while rank grasses, nettles, and wild flowers, riot over the mounds which mark the site of vanished buildings, and their defences. The garden of a neighbouring house occupies what was once no doubt the courtyard. At the time of the Hertford invasion of Scotland it belonged to the Earl of Bothwell, and is described by Patten as "a proper house of great strength." It seems to have passed out of the hands of the Hepburns with the disastrous extinction of the later Earl of Bothwell, Queen Mary's evil genius, though the family are still seated at Smeaton,

in the neighbourhood. Two towers and a fair elevation of connecting curtain still peer above or blink through the tangle of foliage upon the shrunken stream below, though, judging from an old print, the last century must have worked more than common havoc upon this grim relic of a stormy age.

CHAPTER XII

ROUND ABOUT HADDINGTON

The broad, straight road from East Linton to Haddington pursues an undulating course along the high ground above the Tyne valley. Though one runs out here of the Dunbar red land into soils of more ordinary quality, there is nothing but the colour to suggest the fact; for the high standard of East Lothian agriculture practically obliterates to the eye all such natural inequalities, and the difference would be found, speaking broadly, in a four as opposed to a three pound rent. There are pleasant outlooks across the broad, shallow valley of the Tyne, and beyond it, over rich fields and woods, to the Lammermoors. But I may admit at once that this is not a route I would take the responsibility of recommending to the average pilgrim in search of the picturesque. It looks very emphatically its part, which is that of a great main highway, forging straight ahead with one object only in view, and affording for that end every facility of rapid travel, whether for the coach of old or the motor and cycle of to-day. To me, however, it still seems eloquent of another period, that long interlude between the two, when the chariot wheels of agriculture, from the one-horse cart—for waggons and teams are unknown in Scotland—with the sample sacks of grain, to the smart dogcart, or more staid waggonette of the farmer bound for Haddington market, rolled along it in the heyday of its pride. But enough of this. There is nothing on this road to give pause to us here at any rate. A little off it, however,

to the right, the red-tiled roofs of Athelstaneford crown a long low ridge, conspicuous from the inner country as from the distant seashore, a ridge which to the westward rises gradually into the bold upstanding block of the Garleton Hills that are such a conspicuous feature in the heart of East Lothian.

Athelstaneford is as devoid of æsthetic attraction as any average Lowland village. But for an otherwise insignificant place it has a good deal of personal association besides its sounding name. This last was not derived, however, from the famous Saxon king, but from some more or less contemporary namesake of humbler rank and shadowy memory. But the original church was built by the mother of William the Lion, and many centuries later John Home, the author of the tragedy of *Douglas*, was its minister. This play made a great sensation in its day, and a good deal of controversy has since raged concerning the exalted position which was assigned to it. Be that as it may, however, it is a Scottish classic. In another sense, too, it is worth an allusion here, as the spectacle of a Scottish minister writing a play and enhancing the crime by going to see it acted, was in the eighteenth century accounted a fearful and grievous one. So the Presbytery of Edinburgh wrote to the Presbytery of Haddington, notifying them that one of their number had attended a profane play in Edinburgh called *Douglas*, of which he was the reputed author. Before the local body could reply, the unrepentant cleric was actually off to London to see it staged there. It is needless to relate that his manse was vacated at an early date. His Reverence doesn't seem, however, to have troubled the manse very much at any time, but to have taken his ease, mainly in the neighbouring country houses, where he was a very welcome guest,

being exceedingly fond of gay company.[1] The play was made the occasion of tremendous fulminations on the part of the Edinburgh divines, and other Presbyterians, against the drama in general. Every minister caught in the nefarious act of watching a play was to be punished by temporary suspension, and an Act of Exhortation was read from all the pulpits, which included the statement that the Christian Church in all ages had condemned dramatic representations, the authority for which, I take it, was hatched in Edinburgh. All this was in 1756. A predecessor of Home at Athelstaneford, of gloomy temperament, Dr. Blair, wrote a poem called *The Grave*, which, as a kind of antidote, saved the reputation of the parish, and secured the admiration of the critical among the cloth. Such, at least, was the point of view taken by a little chronicle of the parish that I once read, and which struck me as rather whimsical.[2] But that is not all. For, as if to round off the parochial roll of honour, we have on it a marshal of France and a Scottish painter of distinction. Now one of the Hepburns was chief landowner in Athelstaneford when General Leslie encamped in the neighbourhood, just before the battle of Philiphaugh, and the old gentleman paid a visit of respect or curiosity to that commander, taking with him his five sons. One of these found such favour in Leslie's eyes that he offered him a commission on the spot, the beginning of a military career which led afterwards to the command of the Scottish Brigade under Gustavus of Sweden, and ultimately to the French service and its highest

[1] Home had Jacobite sympathies in early life, and wrote the history of the "'forty-five." He was prominent in Edinburgh literary circles, and later on in London under the patronage of Lord Bute.

[2] Dr. Carlyle, in his inimitable autobiography, speaks of avoiding Athelstaneford manse while paying clerical visits in East Lothian, on account of the dismal personality of this same Blair.

honours, as indicated above. Archibald Skirving was a native and resident of the parish, and is buried in the churchyard with his ancestors. He was a portrait painter of some renown, who might, it is said, have amassed a fortune. He was paid a hundred guineas each for his pictures, but seems to have cherished the spirit, rather than the gains of his art, to have taken immense pains with his work, and been content with sufficient reward to keep him in comfort, amid the quiet pleasures of country life, and mount him on a good horse. He left, however, considerable property at the close of a long life, and the family name has since been an honoured one in the van of Lothian agriculture.

A far more circuitous, but much more picturesque, and, to most people, no doubt more interesting route from Dunbar to Haddington, would be that one which bends round near the foot of the Lammermoors, and passes by Belton, Biel, Stenton, and Whittinghame, and could be extended to take in Garvald and Gifford. Whatever might be thought of the main road between the two chief towns of the county by pilgrims with nothing of the Arthur Young, the Pennant, or the Cobbett in their composition, there can be little doubt but that the other would commend itself to any one. For leaving the main road west of Dunbar, it follows the ridgy country above the Biel burn, through all the places watered by that lively stream, till it issues from the Lammermoors. Belton, the first in order, is the ancient seat of one branch of the Hays, who have abounded always in East Lothian. A scion of the Belton house,[1] who fought as subaltern and captain in the Peninsula and Waterloo with much dash and credit, has left the best picture of those stirring events from the personal

[1] William Hay of Spott, near by, A.D.C. to Lord Dalhousie in the Peninsula, eventually Commissioner of London Police.

point of view that I have ever read. Biel is a vast mansion entrenched within noble woods, and enlarged about a hundred years ago from the original house; while the river leaps in a series of cascades beneath the lawns, which slope down to it in a succession of terraces.

It belonged of old to the Lords of Belhaven, who lie buried just beyond in Stenton churchyard, a picturesque roof of stone covering their mausoleum, and though the change of name in ownership has been frequent, the blood is, I think, maintained. The Lord Belhaven who figured so conspicuously when the last Scottish Parliament debated the Treaty of Union, and, in fiery oratory at any rate, led the party which denounced it, has slept here amid the silence of this peaceful country churchyard just two hundred years. His melodramatic language on that critical occasion, and his fantastic gestures, even to falling upon his knees in the House, were long remembered. Beside the Belhaven tomb there rises the tower of the old church with a saddle-back roof, an architectural feature I do not remember to have seen elsewhere in this country, though so few old church towers remain intact, that this may not count for much. The present parish church is about a century old, and of red sandstone, with an imposing tower and a fine east window by Kemp. Not far away is an old holy well of very fine water, walled over and associated with a legend that the tenure of the Biel estate depends upon the preservation of its covering. In the woody lap of the Lammermoors, which rise in the immediate background, is the beautiful loch of Pressmennan, about a mile long, and contrived by a former laird of Biel. The little village of Stenton, lying at the gates of its church, and the pleasant grounds of its substantial red sandstone manse, rises as regards cheerfulness of mien above the average of its neighbours.

The typical cottage of the country, as mentioned on a former page, is a low one-storeyed building of thick red sandstone walls covered with a red tile roof. This is very well. They are in themselves, as may be fancied, not unpicturesque, and when embellished with flowers and well kept up, are distinctly attractive. But the old Scottish habit, such as even I myself can remember perfectly, and one by no means extinct, of entire indifference to externals, made the very worst of the situation, and neutralised what is really an admirable foundation for the cheerful and the picturesque. More generally, too, these cottages stand flush with the road, and are rarely withdrawn within hedges and gardens, as is so often the case with the peasant dwellings of rural England. This spells monotony in a village street of uniform buildings, and in the absence of what may be called external house pride, something approaching to squalor. As to this, however, there appears to have been a prodigious change for the better, and a very general tendency to soften the rather severe fronts of the lowland cottage with flowers or creepers. The constant shifting of the workpeople nowadays must mitigate to some extent against these brightening influences, though such changes are by no means always capricious on their part. A growing-up family, for instance, may require a wider sphere for combined labour than the present situation offers. But that mere love of change without financial or other betterment, which seems to captivate the half-educated, whether the field labourer or the domestic servant, all over the country, is surely a stumbling-block in their path! It would be well to bear in mind, too, that eighty years ago nearly every parish minister in this wealthy county reported with strong protests a one-roomed cottage to be still the rule, accounting it a scandal to the landlords of that day.

A great outcry has recently arisen over the last Scottish census and the small increase therein displayed. Why this congested little island, with its perilously artificial and dependent existence, should bewail a slight check in that increase of population which is its main difficulty, I do not pretend to understand. If, too, in the course of a decade, by operations that would considerably dislocate the rural economy of the whole country, the increase of a single year were put back upon the land, it might or might not prove successful, but it would be a mere fleabite. It is tolerably certain that the food products of East Lothian, at any rate, would decline in bulk and value if comparatively impecunious small men of very mixed capacity were in part substituted for the skill and capital that makes the country an object-lesson for any one who has eyes to see. Land tinkering in a country like Britain, the mass of whose people of all classes must be entirely without any practical experience of the soil, is an irresistible temptation to vote-catching by politicians of both sides. Outsiders do not think they know more about ships or engines or medicine than sailors, engineers, and doctors, but they are at all times ready to instruct the farmer, and, worse still, to deal themselves with his raw material, the land, so pregnant as it is with undreamed-of revelations to the unsophisticated. The worst of it all is, that land and its treatment does look so simple. There is a horribly grim humour about old mother earth, in the way she entices both the wise and the foolish, unacquainted with her secrets, to her embraces, and then by slow degrees, too slow for salvation by retreat, reveals to them the depth of their innocence, and the costliness of her methods of enlightenment. When the punishment falls on the individual, it does not much matter: it is his own lookout. But when his

schemes involve other and wider interests, it may be much more serious; and the cruel part of land is that it takes years to reveal itself, and, in the meantime, the mischief is done. What can be said of the intelligence in these matters of a country where large audiences can be told in good faith, and swallow the fallacy without hesitation, that the conversion of fine old

In East Lothian.

fattening pastures into indifferent arable land would be conducive to the economic welfare of the nation? Such an attitude is past praying for, but it may prove extremely dangerous. The East Lothian labourer earns, all told, from 22s. to 24s. a week. His wife or daughter frequently earns 12s. more. This, in the country, is comfort, yet his sons persist in going to Canada. Of course they do. They would in most cases be fools if

they didn't. Hundreds of the young men of other types who go there every year really are fools to do so, but not the young Scotch labourer. There are no hardships out there nowadays for such as he, even if that much mattered to him, and his future is a practical certainty. No scheme of independence on Scottish soil, granted that it be practical, could possibly offer him an equivalent. Such a dream is only possible to men who do not understand or who ignore the actualities of colonial life and the record of the Scottish emigrant. Moreover, what are colonies for ?

Eighty years ago nearly every parish in the Lowlands officially reported a decrease, or its equivalent, owing to emigration to Canada, but the intelligence was then communicated almost without a note of regret. Wages, then paid mainly in kind, only amounted to about 9s. a week. Parish ministers should certainly be kindly and well-informed, and upon the whole impartial judges of the material well-being of their flocks. With practical unanimity every minister in East Lothian and Berwickshire speaks of the comfort in which the labouring people live on what seems to us now a miserable pittance. I mention this without comment, save for the reminder that those were the days of oatmeal porridge, and the keep of a cow. Labour, too, was more abundant. They went to Canada then, and, as previously mentioned, I have myself seen what they made of it.

There can be no question, however, that through a long period of increasing prosperity to landlord and farmer, the British labourer was kept out of his fair share of it. Yet in spite of the present high wages, the young men still go to Canada, and with even a better chance. For in the old days they had to hew their farms out of the bush. Now they put their

ploughs straight into prairie land, an incalculable advantage.

It is assuredly regrettable that the cream of the youth should leave the parishes. You and I, dear reader, may or may not have such an attachment to our native soil that we would forego a good deal to remain on it. But our point of view is from circumstances very different from that of the Lothian hind or his son, and we are apt to forget this. We should all like to keep this admirable people in the country for material, and, unconsciously perhaps, for sentimental reasons of our own. We easily persuade ourselves that it would be much nicer for the young labourer himself if we could keep him here, and weave schemes which even on paper offer no equivalent to that other prospect open to him. He himself doesn't care a button about sentimental considerations. The British youth of no class is much afflicted with nostalgia, much less a sturdy prosaic Lothian hind. It is idle for the townsman with idealist views of Arcady prescribing for an ailment that has no appreciable existence—among the strong at any rate. Such, at least, is my experience, and I have seen two generations of emigrants of all sorts proceed to North America, and seen their doings there.

Whittinghame (pronounced *Whittinjam*, with a soft "g," as is usual in the Saxon country on both sides of the Border) follows almost immediately upon Stenton, and wide-spreading woodlands of nearly a century's growth enclose a delightful glen, where, immediately beneath the house, the Biel burn, as it is called, courses down between narrow meads. The name of Whittinghame is familiar hearing to the present generation of Britons. It was purchased by the ex-Premier's grandfather, second son of John Balfour of Balbirnie, in 1817, who built the present mansion and planted the woods. The charms

which it owes to a happy combination of nature and art and a commanding position are increased by the near presence of the wild hills of Lammermoor, rising almost immediately in the rear in significant contrast. Set amid sylvan scenes of great luxuriance watered by living streams, resting on the fringe of East Lothian fatness and the romantic wilds of Lammermoor, Whittinghame would seem to want nothing of all that makes for an ideal country seat. And if the house itself lacks antiquity, an old tower in fairly good preservation still stands in the garden, and represents the ancient owners of the property, who were for the most part conspicuous people. If the oaks of Whittinghame have been listening to secrets of State for the last quarter of a century or more, the ruins of the ancient tower heard enough of them and to spare in the days when Scottish State secrets were of a less beneficent kind, and mainly concerned with battle, murder, and sudden death.

To pass over the earlier owners in the days of Queen Mary, the barony of Whittinghame, with its castle, was the property of no less a person than the Earl of Morton. After his expatriation in England, for his share in the assassination of Rizzio, the other and more memorable crime, the murder of Darnley, is said to have been concerted at Whittinghame in the presence of its owner, together with Bothwell, Archibald Douglas, and Maitland of Lethington, at the close of 1566. After Morton's death for his share in the extinction of, it must be admitted, that utterly impossible king consort, James VI. restored the forfeited estates to that branch of the Douglases whose heiress eventually carried it to a Hay—a family which, like the Hepburns, may be said to have had immemorial association with this whole northern fringe of the Lammermoors,

From their descendants the present owners came into it by purchase.

In many of my former wanderings in Wales and England I have been tempted, and with, I think, no cause for regret, into many odds and ends of family history. In these two Scottish counties, I have felt more diffidence on the subject, partly, I trust, from such share of modesty as becomes a southerner, and a reluctance to encroach on what is obviously a Scotsman's preserve. It is not to the point that the native chronicler in any popular sense has been singularly indifferent to this rural portion of the heart of Scotland—for the heart of Scotland did not beat, for luminous reasons, where anatomy or geography would place that organ. But no doubt these arrears will be made up in the fulness of time, and it is no disparagement of their importance to hazard an opinion that they will be more interesting to the Scottish than to the general reader. Not merely because the latter's personal acquaintance with the sister kingdom is generally confined to its comparatively unpeopled, and comparatively unhistoric portions, but on account of the intricacies which arise when a mere handful of families, or clans (to borrow a term), in their various ramifications dominate the situation. The subtle distinctions and significance of the various branches of the same name, as severally indicated by their respective possessions, are more or less understood by Scotsmen, but bewildering to the average southerner, who, furthermore, is almost sure to know nothing at all of Scottish history, the only clue to it.

It is both easy and profitable to make a slight detour from Whittinghame, to skirt the Lammermoors at close quarters and follow twisting, narrow, and lonely roads, through a foothill country where the pastoral

life of the hills merges in snug woody valleys that baffle with their broken surface all the efforts of even a

Stonypath Tower, near Garvald.

Lothian plough to wipe out the charm of nature's irregularities. In doing so we should pass hard by the solitary tower of Stonypath, a second place of ancient defence

on the old Whittinghame barony, but in either case are soon confronted with the hillfoot village of Garvald, the woodlands of Nunraw, and its winding glen, mounting towards the Lammermoors. We stood in fancy upon their brink just above here, it will I trust be remembered, in a previous chapter, and discussed its claims to be the scene of Scott's immortal tragedy. In this long, red-roofed village beside the tumbling burn and beneath the leafy hill, time has of a truth stood still. The natives, though in less idiomatic terms, declare it has done worse than stand still. The only sign of changed times were a few picture post-cards of local scenery in the window of the village post-office, which gave me something of a shock. For everything else, to the smallest detail, was that of a day when such a thing would have been utterly inconceivable, and the post-cards looked almost uncanny. I hunted about for some antediluvian, with whom to crack concerning those same old days. But the village wise men, and others who had probably no claim to that distinction, all shook their heads. Forty years went behind the naturalisation of most, and the memories of the rest, for the latter-day shifting about of the Lothian peasantry seems to have been remarkable. The estate had been sold—not a very common occurrence, strange to relate, in this country—and the laird moved away long ago. I strolled up to the farmhouse on the hill above, of intimate memory through a gorgeous springtime and summer, when the days were long in every sense, though the passing of each was grudged. The thousand acres of broad fields pertaining to it waved up in billowy green folds—for the pastoral interest is strong up here—to the silent steeps of the Lammermoors. An afternoon sun amid a showery August lit up at this moment of revisitation the fresh green pastures, and

the white fleeces of the Cheviot sheep sprinkled over them, warmed up the red roofs of the village in the glen below, glowed upon the mantling woodlands above, and fired the purple slopes and crests of the overhanging moors. The old occupant, like the owner of all this sequestered Arcady, and like everybody else, so far as I could gather, had disappeared. Perhaps some veteran shepherd still trod the hills who took part in the sheep-shearing at yonder upland steading, when even blackface wool was at a fancy figure, and a new bonnet, if I remember rightly, was the traditional reward of the swiftest shearer. But the bonnet and the plaid have both disappeared, like oatmeal and milk and many other serviceable things, and pease-bannocks, which were probably not so serviceable. The remote successors of these same sheep were feeding on the same fields, the Cheviots below, and the blackfaces specking here and there the heights beyond. The peewits, as of old, filled the silent air with their complaining cries, the Garvald water made music between its red banks in the bare glen, amid the sweeping fields, and only the woodlands of Nunraw stifled the lustier music of its tributary burn, where, as I have already admitted, it pleased me infinitely, and comforts me still, to imagine that Edgar and Lucy plighted their troth.

Now we know the end of our friends, and are generally in a position to know the end of our dogs, and can mourn them at least without remorse. But what about that other friend, servant, and companion —the horse, whether trapper, hunter, or hack. Its security for such a reasonably respected old age as mere equity demands for its faithful service is pitiably uncertain. It seems in this respect to stand forlorn, alone among living creatures—for mere death and the

butcher's knife is, of course, nothing to an animal. And no other, certainly none that has ministered in any way to our wants or our pleasures, is handed over to struggle against waning powers, and possibly on half rations, and under galling stripes to its grave. Inevitable, alas! no doubt; but the man or woman must be of flint indeed, who has not suffered some pangs on this account, though his mere conscience may not be involved. These harrowing reflections, which have had cause to slumber for many a long year, were now reawakened by tender memories of a beautiful little grey mare which, having laid me, her master for a too brief period, under vast obligations in these moors and plains, vanished out of sight under the auctioneer's hammer in Edinburgh, a commonplace tale enough! The door of the stable in the unchanged and temporarily deserted farmyard lay drowsily open, and its occupants were on duty or at pasture. I walked in and stood in the empty stall—the one nearest the wall—which she always occupied, for the excellent reasons that she let fly with her little high-bred heels at everybody who came within reach, except her closest intimates—and sometimes at them too.

Getting up to her head for saddling or other purposes never ceased to be a rather critical operation even with her friends, while the inn ostlers at Haddington and Dunbar almost came to refuse her hospitality. This, no doubt, according to a common law of adjustment, was why she was such a superb light-weight saddle horse. Once out of the stable she was as good as gold, and wouldn't have touched a hair of your head. She was a great deal more than this, for she gave of her best, whatever you asked her for, every minute of every hour you were on her back, and her best was perfection in both ease and speed. A devil in the stable to all seeming, though

only the hysterical victim probably of some fool of a groom, she was a lamb outside, with perfect manners, a perfect mouth, and a willingness that never flagged. A touch of whip or spur would have been an insult. A word was enough and away she went, from her free, sprightly walk, with as little thought of bolting, or in any way playing the fool, as she had of relaxing her best efforts for a moment till a touch stopped her. She was a fascinating witch, this little grey mare of the Lammermoors, with a dual personality, if ever horse had one. To behave like an angel on wings all day, and in every detail of deportment entirely captivate your affections, and then to try and kill you at night, or morning either for that matter, when you took her a feed of oats, was uncanny, even with all allowance for the inscrutable vagaries of the horse tribe.

I looked up to the red streak which represents the perpendicular rough road that, bound for the Merse, here climbs the steep face of the Lammermoors, and recalled the manner in which she used to come down it ; for I don't think a false step was in her composition on highway, byway, or moorland road, or at any pace. I may be forgiven, I trust, for this little ebullition of sentiment in the dark corner of a farm stable, where stolid Clydesdales, healthy, unemotional brutes, the happiest of their kind, I think, if the truth were known, would soon be champing their liberal portions with the unfailing appetite that comes of sufficient, but neither spasmodic, nor over-wrought toil. They too, poor devils, have often enough their sad old age, which seems at odds somehow with the philanthropic spirit of a generation which would be horrified to thus treat its dog. In the next generation there will probably be no horses, except for hunting and polo, and they will be shot when they are

done with, which is all right, and the problem will be solved.

On returning to the village, I was put on the trail of an old gentleman who, though laid on the shelf, was undoubtedly in a position to discuss the ancient history with which I had perplexed all the recognised fountains of authority who were still at large. So with a depressed mental sense of belonging somehow to a prehistoric age that had no corresponding physical sensations, I sought him out in his inner chamber, and I think I may safely say that the crack we had was equal to two doctor's visits. But its purport is of less than no consequence here, though it is needless perhaps to remark that the glorious past, with in this case some justification, was a prominent note.

Though Garvald is one of the most sequestered villages in East Lothian, it is actually but some six miles from Haddington, and that too when you have once climbed through the narrow lanes out of its valley by an admirable road. But the wanderer might well leave this, as the base of a triangle proceeding through scenes of almost purely agricultural interest, and take a wider cast round the other two sides. For at the apex lies the village of Gifford and Yester, the ancient seat of the Marquis of Tweeddale, the head of the Hay clan, altogether a spot of much more note than this secluded and decadent village of Garvald. The way thither, too, is little travelled, and lies pleasantly along the base of the Lammermoors. Gifford is undeniably picturesque, merely as a village—and it is a considerable one—due in part no doubt to the beneficent propinquity of a great house. But then a village street, of which one side consists of a wide mountain stream overhung by woods, has only to avoid the garish, and observe a decent appearance of age and solidity to sustain the

required part. There is a spaciousness, too, about Gifford generally, a hospitable and prosperous-looking inn, and one or two of those public buildings that suggest a cared-for or a self-respecting place. It stands at the very portals of the demesne of Yester, with its woods and finely timbered park lands and tortuous deans, through which the Lammermoor streams urge their riotous currents by miles of leafy and enchanting ways.

All this is, of course, classic soil—assuredly so in Scottish history, but that is too long a tale. It is classic in a more popular sense by virtue of the magic pen of Scott. I will say nothing more of the *Bride of Lammermoor*, though it is obviously—to any one who knows the country and will take the trouble to read the particular chapter of that book previously cited—the other alternative to Nunraw as the chief seat of the tragedy. To the general public it would probably most commend itself on another account altogether. Now Scott, as we before agreed, had almost certainly no intention of precision in the novel. In *Marmion*, however, from first to last there is no such ambiguity. For I trust the reader will not need reminding how the pride of that gorgeously arrogant soul was for once humbled in his lone midnight encounter with the supposititious elfin warrior which Gifford cherished in its woods from immemorial times. Marmion and his suite, it will be remembered, unwelcome for national reasons at Yester House, were reduced to the lowly hospitality of the village inn. It will be further remembered how the recital of the weird local legend by the landlord stirred the sleepless fevered brain of the moody, half-conscience-smitten, half-superstitious egotist. How he sallied forth alone and fully armed on his feverish quest to meet the mystic foe, whose last opponent had been Alexander III. of Scotland centuries before, and in

what different fashion he returned at a mad gallop to his bewildered and faithful squire, to whose hand in silence—

> "The rein he threw,
> And spoke no word as he withdrew,
> And yet the moonlight did betray
> The falcon crest was soiled with clay,
> And plainly might Fitz Eustace see
> The stains upon the charger's knee."

All this and how the gloomy friar of their company, the disguised de Wilton, had stealthily accoutred himself for battle, and followed his deadly foe out of Gifford and personated the local goblin, has thrilled the youth of most of us. It is not quite easy to conjure it up afresh in the village hostelry to-day, with its cheerful appeal to the outside world, which now, I fancy, patronises Gifford not a little in the summer months.

At a more ingenuous period, when the stanzas of *Marmion* still rang clear in one's ears, it was for every reason much easier. It was enterprising to cross half the county and spend a February night, I am quite sure very much to the landlord's surprise, for the sole purpose of visiting the goblin tower and paying a humble tribute to the *genius loci*, or rather to its great interpreter. It was an uncomfortable or rather an unequipped little house in those dim days. The landlord seemed a dour individual, and assuredly incapable of entertaining us, as his remote predecessor had entertained his glittering company, in either prose or verse. I think he was upset at so unexpected a demand as bed and board, and held us but daft lads, running after vain and foolish things, and rather a nuisance than otherwise. At any rate, we found our way to the tower through the labyrinth of these leafless glens, an achievement I ignominiously failed in at this last

visitation, following up the wrong glen on a wet day beyond hope of recovery under such conditions.

Yester House, the seat of the Marquis of Tweeddale, is of late Jacobean or early Queen Anne date and style, and contains not only a great many fine paintings, but owing to the prominent services to the State of so many past members of this distinguished house, is full of historic treasures and memorials of great men, and great events in Europe and Asia. The record of the house of Hay, even this important branch of it in brief outline, is not for us here. It is enough that Yester was one of the baronies of the great Anglo-Norman house of Gifford, and that in 1418 one of its daughters carried Yester to the ancestor of the present family, a member of whom some two hundred years ago thus becomingly expressed his sense of the situation: "Aulam Alii jactent, felix Domus Yestria nube, nane quae sors aliis dat Venus alma tibi." As Lords Hay of Yester for the earlier part of this period, an earldom and a marquisate followed in the seventeenth century. Yester, a corruption of the old Cambrian "ystrad," otherwise Strath, is the name of the parish, the village retaining that of the old Anglo-Norman owners. In pre-Reformation times it was known as St. Bathans, or Bothans, though apparently unconnected with Abbey St. Bathans across the hills, whose seclusion we recently invaded. The ancient church dedicated to that saint stands in the grounds of Yester House, and is of red sandstone, and for the most part about three hundred years old. It is now the family mausoleum, the present parish church being at Gifford.

Lammer Law rears its seventeen hundred feet, crowned with its purple cap to great effect, above the woody ridges of Yester. And all about the base of the Lammermoors just here are charming combes and glades,

some wild in heather, birch, and bracken, or, as at Hopes, a shooting lodge, thrust deep into the glen of that pellucid stream, filled with woods of sycamore and beech now in the full dignity and beauty of a century's growth. A rough, rarely travelled hill-road crosses the Lammermoors from Yester to Longformacus, while a bridle-track mounting almost to the summit of Lammer Law provides a delightful ten-mile walk over the moors to the head of Lauderdale, of which anon.

Most Lowland villages have produced some worthy

Yester.

who has made a name in his day, either at home or abroad, more particularly perhaps the latter. For the Scot was, of course, conspicuous as a soldier of fortune long before he became an East or West Indian nabob, and still longer before he was associated with any particular success as a North American colonist. As he was far inferior to the Englishman in agricultural methods, knowledge, and enterprise, till near the end of the eighteenth century, this is not surprising, though the cause, I am sure, will surprise many. But in scholarship and theology, as well as in arms, Scotsmen, as every one knows, were very much to the fore. To say

that Dr. Witherspoon was a son of the manse at Gifford will almost certainly convey nothing whatever to the reader's mind. But that able scholar and divine, when already of some repute in the Scottish Church, left Edinburgh to become the first head of what is now Princeton University in New Jersey, an institution which aspires to rivalry with Harvard and Yale. He was invited thither, no doubt, by the Scotch-Irish, otherwise the Ulster-Presbyterian element, which was very strong in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, thanks to the utterly fatuous policy of both the Dublin and British Parliaments of that day, towards their surest source of support in Ireland. Unlike the Highland emigrants of the same century, the Scotch-Irish, which is not surprising, took the popular side to a man against the Crown in the American Revolution. Witherspoon was such an able and influential partisan in the same cause, that he was selected to represent New Jersey in the famous American Congress of 1776, and was one of the signers of the "Declaration of Independence." He was the chief moving power, too, in the American Presbyterian connection, most of its leading ministers having been his pupils, while no less than thirty members of subsequent Congresses had also sat at his feet. His descendants maintained the family tradition for scholarship and theology, and possibly a former personal acquaintance with some of them may have unconsciously provoked me to doing honour here to a Gifford worthy that has probably none whatever in his native village.

Fired peradventure by the success of his contemporary and playfellow, the son of the schoolmaster in the same village, who was minister of Montrose and a man of learning, accepted the call to the Presidency of another embryo college in the United States. The love

of high-sounding titles had already seized the American democracy, as Dr. Nisbet discovered to his cost. For as the "President" of an undeveloped backwoods academy, he soon realised that he had dropped back to a position no better than that of his own father, from which modest status he had so successfully raised himself. His sense of humour does not seem to have evaporated with his disappointments, for he wrote home to his friends that America was certainly a land of promise—in fact that it was all promise, and no fulfilment. In such contrast were the fortunes and consequent points of view of two schoolfellows from the same Scotch village! The five miles of road from Gifford to Haddington leaves behind it all the picturesque irregularities of the wandering byways of the Lammermoor fringe, and descends with broad immaculate surface and gentle gradients through stately timber and ornate prolific fields to the once greatest corn market in Scotland. Lennoxlove, one of the most ancient and interesting houses in this country of great seats, lies by the way—better known to fame as the Lethington of that remarkable race of Maitlands, whose cool political heads, general originality, and turn for literature stood out conspicuously in the turbulent Scotland of the sixteenth century. We shall come across them again in Lauderdale, whence they took their titles, and were and still are large landowners.

The two members of the family most associated in popular memory with Lethington are Queen Mary's brilliant secretary, chancellor, and friend, and his father, old Sir Richard, also politically prominent in his day, but more remembered in this last one perhaps for his poems, which have both merit and piquancy. We may perhaps be allowed also to pay tribute to a Scotsman of mark, who could see practically the whole of

the turbulent sixteenth century through, and die quietly in his bed at ninety! The family were here from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century, and are still, as related, in Lauderdale, where they have been seated as long. Prolific above the common in notabilities though they have been, Queen Mary's Maitland, more particularly known as "Lethington," would for every reason leap first to the mind as Lennoxlove came into view, though his younger brother became Lord High Chancellor of Scotland and Lord Maitland of Thirlestaine. Five Maitlands at least were poets. The highest rank and the greatest power acquired by any of the family, however, was by that unworthy member of it, the notorious Duke of Lauderdale. He was born at Lethington, and when in due course its owner, he enclosed a square mile with a wall twelve feet high, in a fit of pique, it is said, because the Duke of York had sarcastically hinted that there wasn't a park in Scotland. The property changed hands, however, about this time, being purchased by Lord Blantyre, whose descendants still own it, and this mention of the transfer seems incumbent, as it accounts for the change also of the ancient name, a proceeding which does not say much for the taste or historic sense of the purchaser. It seems that most of the money which facilitated the transaction was a legacy or present from his Lordship's relative, that Duchess of Lennox and Richmond so greatly admired by Charles II. Gratitude inspired an innovation, which must surely at the time have provoked the gibes—how well one can fancy them—of the countryside. Time, however, has long obliterated all sense of novelty, and given on the contrary a pleasant, mellifluous, and even historic flavour to the name of Lennoxlove.

Haddington lies to great advantage in the rich-

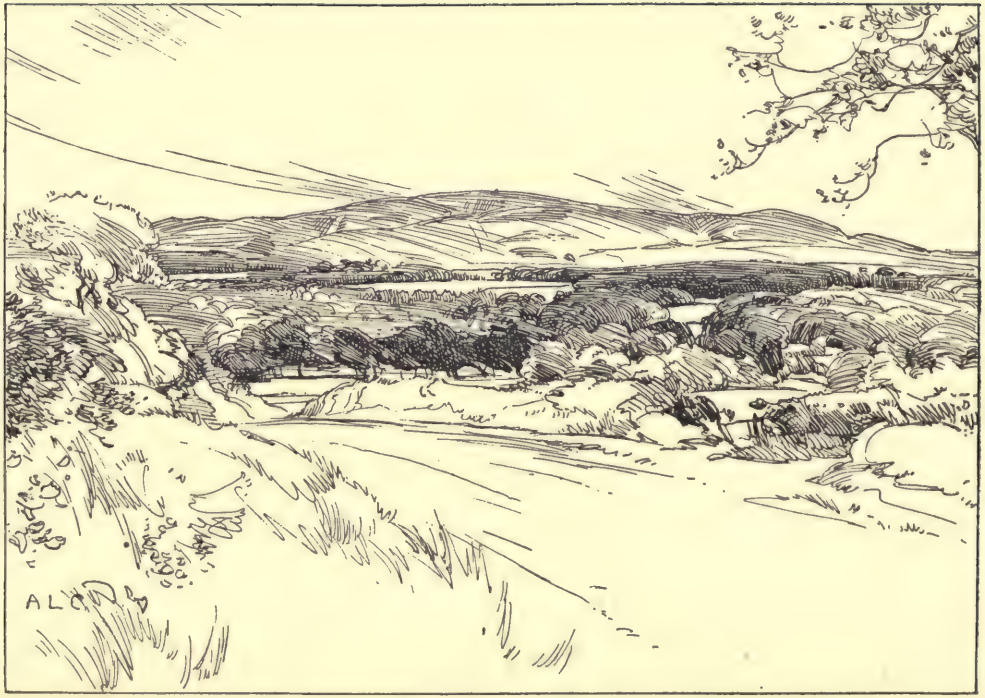
tinted valley through which the Tyne murmurs for so many long miles with gentle voice. The long, undulating slant down to it from the Lammermoors leaves in the retrospect an interval country of woods and universal opulence, that form a pleasing foreground to the rolling line of moors still near enough to make their presence felt. Immediately north of the town, too, the Garleton hills, a sharp ridge of down rather than of moorland, here reach their highest point, about 500 feet, of their brief but conspicuous career. Looking down from any part of them, or from the road which toils seaward laboriously over their shoulder, the prospect rewards the effort; the gleam of the Tyne showing here and there as it urges its leafy course from one seat of ancient fame to another, with the great abbey church, the "Lamp of Lothian," raising its massive red tower and half-ruinous walls by the river's bank at the fringe of the little town.

From here Haddington suggests its picturesque, romantic, and historic side. Down in the wide-cobbled High Street, between its austere and rather prosaic buildings you might well think of its famous son, John Knox, but to me on revisiting it historical interests of every kind were for the moment in abeyance. It had apparently altered nothing in the quarters that mattered. It looked, and I daresay is, as prosperous nowadays as any ordinary county town. Market towns are of no account in themselves, save as a gathering-place for their county or district, by which they stand or fall. And in spite of motors and bicycles, and some new villas on the outskirts, and a thoroughly sound and secure appearance, I seemed to see a town from which the glory had departed. A town no longer of more or less account or reputation than a hundred other such scattered over the face of Scotland and

England, with an excellent market, no doubt, and assuredly a "good neighbourhood," if its occupants remain at home! But all that is nothing for a town that was once the first grain market in Scotland, in days when grain filled a much larger place actually and proportionately in the national economy than to-day. Such a distinction does not build up a town, which is only of commercial consequence as reflecting the condition of its tributary country, and there is no reason why Haddington should reflect in its face, any more than the fields of East Lothian, the enormous changes it has seen since those days; changes in men, and manners, and fortunes, and the outlook on life, the shifting of centres of influence, and the general disturbance of the whole balance of things. Veterans in the 'seventies could look around them at Haddington market, and tell with truth of great changes they had seen. They could revert, for instance, to the period before the Reform Bill, when Scotland, far more than England, was in the hands of the landowning classes, and its electorate of still more microscopic dimensions. They could talk of the coming of train and steamship and telegraphy, but none of these things had so far done anything save enhance the pride and prosperity of rural life. Rent-rolls were at their highest; farmers were comfortable and confident, with a vast amount of capital in the soil, and quite prepared to meet all the normal risks hitherto associated with agriculture. Labourers, with the value of about thirteen shillings a week, were just beginning to discover that they had not, perhaps, had their fair share of the increment—but that is a detail always within the scope of the trade. The atmosphere, however, which these sombre, unaltered streets emitted when I had last walked them was utterly different from that which with their unaltered

Fidra Island.

exterior they breathe to-day. It was then still the old régime, which meant everything, no matter what the changes and improvements it had witnessed. A young man of to-day dropped into the Haddington of the 'seventies would on the surface see nothing much to surprise him—nothing to speak of, even in dress. But his equivalent of the 'seventies precipitated with like magic and despatch into the middle of the 'thirties would have felt, on first looking round, far more out of it. Yet he was really living in the same epoch, only a more developed period of it, whereas the modern is separated from both by a revolution. It would be quite impossible that he could see country life in its economic bearings, as they and all the generations before, according to periods, saw it. He has been brought up to think of farming land as the most precarious of all regular investments, to see it the most habitually compassionated of all the great interests, yet with apparent paradox the most heavily burdened whenever the nation is short of money, and, furthermore, to be made the subject of schemes innumerable, in all of which the necessary factor to success, the British working-class, is almost an untried and inexperienced factor. He has been fed a good deal on literature and journalism, which, outside the technical publications, sedulously spreads an impression that the British farmer is a sort of failure, an impression that will be strengthened by the casual opinions of most people he comes in contact with—lawyers, stockbrokers, manufacturers, bootmakers and mechanics, retired officers and gentlemen of leisure, M.P.'s and other of the great host of amateurs to whom the secrets of the soil have never been divulged. He is quite accustomed to hearing the agriculture of foreign countries held up as an example, and to think of Great Britain agriculturally as in a bad way.



Near Gifford.

But the rights or wrongs of all these things were not pertinent to the sensations awakened within me, as I trod the streets of old Haddington once again. They spoke of a time when such questions, or, to be more direct, the causes that provoke them, would have been simply incredible; of those secure and halcyon days, when the one thing upon earth that was immutable, socially and commercially, and beyond the reach of the sordid fluctuations of trade and commerce and of anything but a national catastrophe like the French Revolution, was British land. And if a county town in Britain was calculated, not of course for itself, but for its associations, to recall the "then" and the "now" of the situation, it was Haddington. I may be misunderstood in this, for in mere rents and readiness to pay them, formidable as they would seem to a southern ear, the county has come back nearer to the old standard than almost any other. But this is in a sense reconstruction. The old tenantry, as I remarked before, have mostly gone. Above all, and far more significant, the atmosphere in which they lived and moved has absolutely vanished. They were formerly an almost uniform type, professional farmers by inheritance, who had grown to prosperity with the increased fertility of the acres they and their fathers had handled with such skill and enterprise. Very few of the old stock, as I have said, are left. The present occupants, admirably as they appear to maintain in most respects the traditions of tillage, are a new and a mixed lot, as in Berwickshire—men of more varied class and origin, from practical working men, who have acquired the credit or money to enter on good farms, to the sons of outside capitalists, who have taken up farming as a profession.

The old George Hotel looks solemnly down the

High Street, unchanged, so far as I can recall it, in any detail. Those prolonged feasts at the farmers' ordinaries, as elsewhere, are practically no more. Many a speech was made on those occasions by great landowners bearing on the relations of landlord and tenant that found their echoes in the London press, when East Lothian was, in a manner, the apex of all that was perfect in a system that was then held as the earth's perfection for all time. Foreign competition, the direful phrase which sums up the whole situation, was not even dreamed of. Farmers now, as everywhere else in Britain, get away home, as a rule, when their business is transacted, or may even be seen on occasions in tea-shops, lunching off a scone and butter—not from motives of thrift in this country of large operation but because they have fallen under twentieth century influences. This would have been a parlous spectacle indeed, in days I wot of. I couldn't resist a passing glance into a large upper chamber in one of the two or three well-known houses of entertainment in these old-time market days, silent enough on this occasion but for the tick of a clock which had obviously struck the passing hours of many generations and seemed sympathetic. The empty chamber seemed again thick with tobacco smoke, from a score or two of pipes, and noisy with a babel of broad hearty voices, and the chink of many glasses, and the carrying to and fro of trays, laden with gills of whisky, in regulation cut-glass circular measures that seem to have disappeared with the rest of all these sad rollicking ways.

There was nothing reprehensible about these mid-day symposiums, at any rate from the then current point of view, and the whisky in those days was, of course, above reproach. They were merely in the ordinary way of business and social intercourse, while in and out of the

corn exchange or cattle market. But the old clock in the corner ticked out unmistakably that it had seen these times; and perhaps it held reactionary views upon the subject, and, for aught I know, regretted the disappearance, not merely of the normal consumer, but even of the twelve-tumbler man, whom it had so often warned to go home. A monograph recently written on the life and wide operations of a well-known Border farmer by his son concludes a quite illuminating little work with the ingenuous tribute that its subject "may fairly have been regarded as a temperate man, considering the number of twelve-tumbler men among whom he frequently moved." Scotland as a country, read by statistics, which we all know may be made to prove anything, is still, I believe, the despair of the temperance reformer. I don't know anything about the North and West or the regions, roughly speaking, which draw their supplies from Glasgow. But the rural South-East is now the pink of propriety. The guileless, matter-of-course conviviality of former days—to say nothing of the twelve-tumbler man—has practically gone. Even if it hadn't, the present generation would assuredly not get the good stuff their fathers drank; while, as for the ordinary hotels, you are as likely to be served with poison as in similar places south of the Tweed.

Afternoon tea is a subtle but efficacious ally of the temperance advocate. One need not be a Methuselah to remember its introduction into polite circles in the South, and it need hardly be said it long ago took its place as a function in the higher class farmhouses in Scotland. The sinful who are not wholly converted, now appear to quench their well-regulated thirst in a whisky and soda, like any ordinary southerner, which is very prosaic. As to the agricultural labourer, he was a

temperate man in my day compared to his south-country equivalent, and going from one to the other the contrast was great. He was paid a good deal in kind for one thing, and had very little cash. Whisky, compared to ale, which was scarcely then used or obtainable, was dear; while the village pot-house with its sociable evenings in the southern sense, and its oratorical orgies, had and has practically no existence for the Scottish hind. To turn again to their employers, and the changes that have taken place. In one large and important country parish, well known to me in former days, where the wiping out of old stocks has been tolerably complete, I was told when recently there, that most of the sitting tenants were dissenters, whereas a former generation had been mainly supporters of the parish church, a fact that has no bearing at all on the condition of the Establishment, which throughout Scotland is, I believe, stronger than formerly, but merely indicates the change of men. The same authority, who ought to know, supplemented this statement by a further one that they were mostly total abstainers—a following which, I do not think, has any particular denominational significance in Scotland. For if the West retains its fondness for the bottle with greater tenacity than the East, it is there, at any rate, that secession always found its greatest strength.

The Canadian churches, like those of the United States, cannot understand even the temperate use of alcohol, an attitude mainly due to the fact that outside a small class of more cosmopolitan habit, the native of those countries is incapable of consuming it, either in the Christian manner or with the moderation of a civilised man in Europe. He uses it, with slight regard to quality, as a mere means of getting drunk and staying drunk for a prolonged period, after which he gets

upon his feet, washes and shaves himself, and returns to respectability and cold water till the fit seizes him again. I happened to be staying in Canada some winters ago when a team of Scottish curlers were touring the Dominion. One or two ministers—on their sporting merits, not as shepherds—were among the visitors, and some of the more serious papers expressed a pious horror that the reverend exponents of the roaring game not merely countenanced, but actually shared in the harmless convivialities, which it would be almost an outrage on tradition for a company of Scottish curlers to omit. The more frivolous journals, in the meantime, made great sport of their censorious contemporaries. When the parting hour came, and the final "send off" from, I think, Montreal, was celebrated, the defiant and unrepentant nature of the Scotch divines was illustrated for them by a sympathetic local band, who played them off to the immortal strains of "We're nae that fou, we're nae that fou." Upon the whole, the censors had the worst of the encounter, which, at least, caused some merriment at a great many breakfast tables—it certainly did at ours! Times have changed, of a truth, in Scotland, as everywhere else, since the days when law lords had their trays and bottles on the bench, and, if history speaks truly, administered justice, and possibly even-handed justice, in a state of chronic elevation. "Good God! my lord," said one of these illuminati to the other after listening to a truculent performance on the part of a prisoner whose excuse was inebriety, "if the fellow could make such a blackguard of himself when he was drunk, what would he not do when he was sober."

But the East Lothian folk were temperance men compared to the big-stock farmers of Aberdeenshire in those days, the Polled Angus breeders, who had

already established a reputation in two continents for their black cattle. I don't know what they did in summer, but in winter they drank whisky like milk, or water at any rate, at all times, and were not often apparently much the worse for it. Nor quite obviously did they die young, as they ought to have done, if medical science has even a basis of truth. On the contrary, they appeared to flourish on it like green bay trees. Perhaps the expert in these matters makes a mental reservation as regards Scotsmen, or they may be outside his experience. These analytical indictments of the pernicious thing do not seem to emanate from Edinburgh or Glasgow, renowned as those two cities are for light and learning. It would not be safe, I take it. The unaccountable is, or was too much in evidence.

I remember a few years ago, in a country town in the Canadian North-West, meeting an individual who had been quite a popular character in East Lothian, till well on in middle age. I remembered him vaguely, as the embodiment of tolerably consistent, but quite respectable conviviality, and in a prospering condition. Like most Scotsmen, his feelings were very warm towards his old environment, but, unlike most, he had not succeeded—too old, no doubt, for transportation—and he deeply felt his exile, which was due to the punishing years of the 'eighties. He daily frequented my hotel, and having met nobody, apparently for years, who could exchange at least familiar names, and listen with some knowledgeable sympathy to his reminiscences, he fell, so to speak, into my arms, with almost pathetic fervour. The people in the hotel said he was too honest a man to get on in that country, which was more complimentary to him than to their own neighbourhood, though they didn't look at it that

way. However, he was still decently convivial, under conditions infinitely less innocuous than the same degree would have implied in the Scotland of his day. But though at least seventy, he was apparently as strong as a horse. This is almost immoral; but as it is not likely to be perused by the young, anxious to emulate the feats of the ancients, it doesn't matter. Even the Aberdeenshire grazier is, I daresay, now converted to the teapot.

One more East Lothian notability, or, at least, familiar figure of the 'seventies, who sought the North-West, and parted, or rather flinched, from the reality of its elementary terrors, comes back to me, with a flavour of humour in this case rather than of pathos. Estimable and popular, he was agriculturally something of a black sheep. The beautiful uniformity of appearance with which the weedless parallelograms of grain and roots, of beans and seeds, succeeded each other over the summer landscape of East Lothian, faded perceptibly over the square half-mile, more or less, occupied by the future pioneer. Unfortunately, too, it adjoined a farm of high renown in those days, whose veteran bailiff, incomparable among his kind, used to look over the boundary fence, shaking his head, and muttering more in sorrow than in anger, for he was prodigiously original, "Puir Maister D., puir Maister D.," as I have heard him apostrophise his master's neighbour many a time. And many a time I have also heard him in his emphatic archaic Doric, with unforgettable variations all his own, use much stronger language. "A maist heinous mon who makes me purely seek" (sick), was his favourite denunciation of this otherwise exemplary person, whose farming would have, perhaps, been thought admirable in Suffolk, but was not of a kind to pay a rent of seventy shillings, and leave a profit.

The "maist heinous mon," however, then in middle life, decided to go to Manitoba, probably the first of his type who had braved the then unknown and but little suspected terrors of the pre-railroad North-West. Possibly a farmer from East Lothian, with its cheerful social atmosphere, its golf, its curling, and its whist and other games, above all, its expansive scientific methods, was as likely to founder in that then scantily peopled solitude of the earliest 'eighties as any one; certainly, to be more unhappy, even though a Scotsman, than a younger son or a light-hearted subaltern with soul unvexed by the subtleties of high-class British farming. The "maist heinous mon," however, launched his bark for that then far country, loaded with his household and his household gods, with sanguine expectations, taking dim shape, no doubt, as an illimitable East Lothian. There was a tremendous farewell dinner at a popular hostelry, a fact I remember, because some one sent me the local paper, as I had seen the promised land, a comparatively uncommon experience in those days. There were toasts galore, and two or three columns of speech-makings calculated to make a reader familiar at once with the promised land and with East Lothian cynical or sad. The new country, if I remember rightly, was to surpass its own reputed virgin abundance, under the inspiring touch of East Lothian science—and the glasses clinked. Alas for the seeming paradoxes of agriculture. The "maist heinous mon," bag and baggage, was back again among these sorrowing friends within the year, not because he was a failure, or, so far as I know, faint-hearted, but because he was a person of discernment, though more tolerant than his East Lothian neighbours of the stray thistle or the insidious couch grass. For on being confronted with the stern realities of the North-West, he saw a country

for the East Lothian hind, perhaps—but not yet for the East Lothian farmer good or bad. It was better to make the brief sport of a day among his neighbours at home, and live happily, if modestly among them ever after, than make a middle-aged fight with hardships and difficulties, that promised but doubtful and inadequate compensation to his type. Many a good man and good woman not middle-aged lived joylessly and died prematurely under the earlier struggle with North-Western Canada. And what is the use of a boom in land when your health is broken, or five years after you are dead? And this is exactly what would have happened to the "maist heinous mon," who went up in my estimation, when I heard of his *volte face*. From a dim figure associated with thistles—unthinkable spectre in East Lothian!—and boisterous on the curling rink, he stood out as a man of courage and of sense. He was a man of parts outside agriculture, and either with or without their aid lived, I believe, serenely, and died in peace upon good Scottish soil.

Long before that great life-adventure, however, of the "maist heinous mon," his whilom critic over the fence had preceded him across the Atlantic, and astonished the natives in and around a prosperous Ontario country town with his trenchant denunciations of their slipshod agriculture, in a Doric almost too fragrant for the understanding of a semi-Scottish population. These Canadians, sons themselves, many of them, of Scottish hinds, immigrants of the 'thirties, would not have stood it from anybody else, and I am not sure if they would have stood it even from this grand old man had they comprehended it all. He was rather a privileged person, however, for his sons had gone out in youth and acquired in trade money and position; and to their neighbourhood, with a fifty-acre

farm to play with, he retired to spend the evening of a life hitherto devoted with unswerving ardour and fidelity to a single master and a famous Lothian farm. It was my privilege to know him well, and yet more, to see him afterwards in his new sphere, and occasionally to hear him holding forth in his forceful and inimitable style to wondering Canadian farmers on the street, and telling them his candid opinion of their agricultural deficiencies in terms which, as I have said, they haply could seldom grasp. If he had been young, with his way to make, no doubt he would have held his tongue, like most young Scotsmen, to their great advantage, till experience made it safe to loosen it. But his way was made, and he was near the end of it, so he let fly. His ancient and "maist heinous" neighbour, as I have shown, proved wise in his generation in a negative way. But this really great East Lothian agriculturist was transplanted too late to avoid the pitfalls with which a strange country invariably confounds the overwise. In such time as there was left him, he proceeded to show his new neighbours how to farm, as it so happened, at the very entrance to the town. By the time he had rolled all the rocks off his fifty acres of rather poor land, combed it and groomed it, and reduced its primitive irregularities to a condition amenable to East Lothian treatment, and when the first crops suggested no similarity to a Lothian harvest field, the old gentleman began to quieten down and to learn something, and to his surprise no doubt. He no longer harangued the farmers from his gate as they drove to market, on the error of their ways, and if he hadn't been a little deaf he would have heard enough and to spare of passing criticism on "the pile of money sunk in them poor fields." They were covered with villas the last time I saw them, and the grass had been growing for

thirty years on the grave of this once notable East Lothian worthy, comparatively humble in station though he was. Born on a famous farm in a hind's cottage, he rose to be something more than bailiff on it for half his life. His standard of duty and conduct as regards himself and others may have been irksome, but I am inclined to think it communicated itself somehow to the three score or so of men and women under him. Awe was certainly an element in his authority. He had a voice that would carry nearly all over the six hundred acres, and a whistle hanging to his waistcoat that would carry even further than his voice, and there was not a tree or a bush on the whole place to break the force of either. When he appeared at the gate of a thirty-acre field, the subdued cackle of the bondagers ceased abruptly with a "Whisht, yon's Hugh," and twenty poke bonnets bent over their Dutch hoes, as they pushed them with renewed zeal along the wheat drills. The ploughman halting for a moment on the headrigg, started and swung his pair of horses round and gee-hawed away for his life, when he heard that voice two fields away. Its forms of admonition took almost terrifically allegorical form at times. "Mon, d'ye no ken ye're a thief," he would shout to some hind caught loitering unawares. The slow-moving mind had no time for asking an explanation before it came—"Y're takin' yer maister's siller an' stealin' his time." But this was not truculency; and no one took it as such. He believed it thoroughly, and applied it to himself with absolute rigidity. His moral code was austere. More than one married couple on the farm, it was credibly said, had found themselves man and wife owing to his prompt action, whether they liked it or not, and with surprising celerity. And with all this he was the kindliest of men. His grey eyes

twinkled with fun beneath their bushy brows as he launched his jokes with no particular respect of persons, but with never the faintest flavour of coarseness. He had travelled a little, apart from the agricultural shows, which were, of course, a joy and delight, though seldom indulged in. Men who had known and appreciated him, or, I might say, had sat under him, and had come to farm farms or own estates, used to ask him to visit them on those rare occasions when he permitted himself a holiday. His reminiscences of these jaunts were of undying interest to himself, and an infinite treat to his hearers. Still greater treat it must have been to tramp over Lincolnshire fields or Irish pastures with him in the flesh, and hear his comments, for he had a general contempt, with reservations, for all agricultural ways south of the Tweed. On Sunday mornings he repaired with his wife and family to the U.P. church, four miles away, taking dinner along and eating it between services on the seashore. After that he brought the minister back with him, and spiritual exercises filled their evening. Theology, however, was abandoned on Monday morning, and the results of a strenuous Sabbath showed themselves in the best and most practical shape throughout the week. His very intelligence, and his little travels, and a certain intercourse with persons of another world, had tended to confuse his phraseology when he wished to be impressive. It would be ill taste to quote the sentence with which this really superb man invariably concluded his long grace before meat, but no living soul was ever known to grasp its meaning. Upon the whole, he was an individual whose daily example tended to one's self-abasement.

CHAPTER XIII

THE EAST LOTHIAN SHORE

LUCERNA LAUDONIÆ, the Lamp of Lothian, as Fordun in the fourteenth century styled the beautiful abbey church of Haddington—a felicitous appellation that has in a manner clung to it for all time—is the only spectacular attraction Haddington offers to the casual visitor. It is of cruciform design, fashioned of rich red freestone, which, a tradition similar to that associated with many other mediæval edifices maintains, was brought from Garvald, six miles away, by passing it stone by stone along a line of men. The church, of Gothic style, is all that remains of a Franciscan monastery founded in the thirteenth century. The nave measures 200 feet from end to end, the transept about half as much, and there is a fine massive central tower 90 feet high. The western portion of this beautiful building has been always used as the parish church. The rest of it was in the hands of the workmen on a recent visit. It rises above a large well-shaded graveyard outside the town, and near the banks of the Tyne, altogether a site in harmony with its stately proportions and its abounding memories. Whether it was gutted by the English during Hertford's raids in that singular interlude between the English and Scotch reformations, when the former, figuring as Protestants, threw down the altars of Lowland papists, or whether the Scotch reformers, in their iconoclastic orgies after 1559, took the chief hand, I do not know. There seem to have been at one time

The "Lamp of Lothian."

Tantallon Castle and Bass Rock.

as many as fourteen altars in the church, and it was always the burial-place of men of birth and might and piety. Chief occupants of all, perhaps, are the Maitlands of Thirlestaine and Lennoxlove, an immense and gorgeous monument having been reared within the church to the memory of John, Lord Maitland, Chancellor of Scotland, who lies here in effigy beside

Lennoxlove.

his wife. A peculiar interest, however, attaches to the tomb from the fact that the dozen or so metrical lines of eulogy and lament comprising the epitaph were written by James VI. and I. on his favourite minister.

In vaults below lie other Maitlands, among them the notorious Duke of Lauderdale—"Sole Secretary for Scotland to the best of kings, Charles II.," is the travesty inscribed upon his coffin plate—while near the

coffin stands a stone urn proclaiming that it contains "all the intestines, except the heart" of John of Lauderdale. Perhaps the last-mentioned article was found wanting! Almost within the shadow of the church, and just across the Tyne, John Knox was born. The very house, with dubious authenticity, is pointed out. He attended the Grammar School here in popish times, and as he was notoriously reticent about the first forty years of his life, it is assumed that the creed against which he raged so violently for the rest of it, hitherto satisfied him. The Earls of Bothwell were Lords of Haddington in his day, and an old house with a round tower and steeple turret remains in a side street as a survival of their fortress. But neither for the teeming story, lay or ecclesiastical, of this ancient town, nor yet for a purview of its few remaining architectural fragments that bear witness to it, is there space here. With the long Anglo-Scottish struggle; with the civil wars waged in the cause of religion; with the bloodless, but bitter theological cleavages that have thrilled Scotland in later times, and of which the average Englishman knows less than nothing;—in all these things Haddington has played a prominent part. And I have had the hardihood to pass over all its stir of drum and trumpet and pulpit, and at the sight of its shrunken corn market become wholly absorbed in its other atmosphere, and dropped uncompromisingly into reminiscence! There are people, too, I am quite sure, who would discard all these things, and all the men and women of the ages who have fought, or made pageants, or preached, or foregathered here, and hunt out the house where Jane Welsh lived, before she married the sage and prophet of Ecclefechan.

Leaving the Edinburgh road to pursue its broad way through the eastern part of the county into Mid-

Lothian, and climbing the Garleton hills by the one that leads north to the sea-coast, a notable bit of country spreads out below. This is that low undulating and comparatively treeless tract which bulges slightly out into the Firth. On its western edge the woods of Gosford and Luffness mantle about the sandy flats of Aberlady Bay. Its eastern limit may be roughly defined by the wide woods of Tynninghame, which, through the prescience of a long ago Earl of Haddington, now sweep in luxuriant beauty along the edge of the Tyne's mouth, and give annual pleasure to a multitude besides their owners. A hundred and fifty years ago much of this smooth remorselessly trim country was marsh. It is now, and has been for at least half that period, a perfect picture of scientific farming on a great and generous scale. It is not such a picture as would captivate the artist. On the contrary, he would ramp and rave at such homesteads, planted here and there upon the waving chequered plain, and thrusting up their tall red engine chimneys above the scant fringe of timber. This is not Dunbar red land, but a heavier soil for the most part, of but moderate original fertility. It has been farmed, however, in like manner, and as if every square yard were precious: though, perhaps, an equally moving stimulant is the Lothian farmer's hatred of ragged edges, of crooked lines, of straggling, unkempt fences, of thicket and other nests of weeds, and all things that incidentally make for beauty. One might add, too, an all-pervading prejudice against hedge-row trees and open ditches; though for that matter the whole of this country was tile-drained before most of us were born. As a last word to the occasional reader, who may care for such things, virtually the whole of this district is arable. In old days there was not an acre of permanent pasture outside the

policies, but now there seems to be a field or two here and there laid away to grass. Present rents average about £3 an acre. Potato-fields are still conspicuous here, and come once in the six-course shift, as of old, instead of twice, as is frequent on the superior lands of Dunbar. It is through this open country, between the Garleton hills and the Firth, that the main line to Edinburgh runs. And here, at last, is a point on it familiar to hundreds of southerners. For out among the great turnip and wheat fields stands the forlorn little junction of Drem, unchanged, and apparently unconscious of the flight of time. Here the southern golfer bound for classic shores changes trains for North Berwick, near by, or gets into his fly for Gullane, still nearer. In former days the Peffer burn silted through this water-logged country. It has now this long time been transformed into a shallow canal, running straight for miles between high banks, catching the drip of the tile drains from the prolific fields. I remember being present at the testing of an exceptional yield of swedes in a field upon its banks, which, for those whom such details might concern, may be noted went approximately thirty-five tons to the acre! But the point is that an old man employed in the operation, told me he well remembered this very field as part of a marshy waste, held as an uncanny country by the children for the will-o'-the-wisp which scared them on autumn nights. The rich colouring in summer and autumn of the fields, and the red flare of the sandstone tile-roofed steadings, geometrical in design, all give the landscape a character of its own. I well remember, too, the look of this stretch of country on still, murky November afternoons, when the summer colouring had vanished and left the land sear and brown, when the smoke from half-a-dozen steam ploughs and

as many threshing engine chimneys within easy sight, drifted about in the deepening gloom, giving out an oddly conflicting sense of stir and a queer impression of beef and bread manufacture at high pressure, rather than the normal calm of a conventional winter Arcady. And through it all, in weird contrast, came the almost ceaseless cackle of wild geese and the stray pipe of passing wisps or golden plover. The steam ploughs have almost gone. It is, perhaps, without parallel for a great mechanical invention, widely adopted and once hailed as an epoch-making contrivance with unknown potentialities in the greatest of industries, to snuff out. But this is practically what has happened to steam cultivation in parts of Europe and America, and for reasons which the reader, who has probably had more than enough of agriculture, will care little.

But the summer sun is supposed to be shining on these pages. And after all, this remorseless landscape, where neither the violet, the primrose, the blue bell, the wild rose, nor the honeysuckle, nor the may nor the elder, nor any of the commonplace wildings of the passing season, find footing to grow or opportunity to put out their blossoms, has another side to it. For it is a land of magnificent distances, and moreover abuts upon an always rocky, and distinguished seacoast. Along this last, too, there is for the most part a pleasant interlude, where the ruthless austerity of East Lothian agriculture pethers out into sandy commons and rolling dunes, and blowing woodlands. And here disports itself in villas, mansions, and cottages, clustering thick or sparsely scattered, a joyous population, who, as all the world knows, worship (on week days) one all-exacting deity. From Aberlady Bay and Gullane Hill, whose broad green slopes look down upon it to North Berwick, however diverse their paths may

be on the first day of the week, they all lead the same road on the other six. Most of the able-bodied between four and seventy years of age among a fluctuating community of several thousand souls pursue the bounding core-ball with tireless assiduity over nearly a dozen different golf courses, and have, for the most part, no more truck with the country we have been wandering in than they have with the moon. This stretch of littoral must not be confused with the many courses, or sets of courses, on the west or northern coasts of Scotland, of championship class or otherwise, that are familiar names to southern ears. They are not classic soil; this is. Those others belong to the modern epoch as much as Sandwich, Harlech, or Portrush, and more so than Westward Ho or Hoylake. They were almost as alien to their atmosphere as any in Kent or Ireland, and, as much as these, are the result of the modern development of the game. But here upon the Firth of Forth, we are in the real old golfing section of Scotland, though the procession of courses that on either side of it now line the shores of Fife and Lothian represent, of course, a state of things bearing small relation to that of thirty years ago—thirty, forty, sixty, or a hundred years for that matter. The small developments in detail of the game up till then are of trifling consequence compared to the chasm which divides any of those periods from this one in the number of followers and the attention bestowed on golf throughout the civilised world.

This is assuredly classic soil, not merely because North Berwick lies upon it, and more historically famous Musselburgh, shorn of its glory and attraction, lies virtually within sight, but from the fact that golf has been for hundreds of years a familiar thing upon the coast. What a difference, though, in degree! I think

as a southerner one may fairly account it a privilege, in view of all that has happened, to have played over Gullane links after an interval of forty years. The fact, too, of having followed the game more or less through all its changes and expansion in the South makes such isolated memories of these old conditions seem rather precious. Special trains from Edinburgh and streams of motors from everywhere now bring players to the three courses laid out on and about the broad low hill of Gullane, to that of Luffness at its foot, or to the adjacent championship course of Muirfield. While on a sixth arena, of more modest compass, infants of all ages and both sexes engage with as much gravity as their elders. A mixed foursome, aggregating perhaps thirty years, may be seen holing out on one green, while on a neighbouring tee an urchin, as recently hatched, is addressing his ball with preternatural gravity. Such wee folks are usually incapable of playing ordinary games by rule and to order. None of those spasmodic evolutions quite irrelevant to the business, nor clamorous interludes which distinguish the very small boy wielding a bat or delivering a ball of any kind are visible here. They appear to play what was once called in its callow days of golf-understanding by the southern press, the "old man's game," with all the gravity of an old man. This may be due, in part, to the discipline and sporting spirit, which it is apparently the sacred duty of the attendant, mother, nurse, or governess, in this atmosphere to instil. The solemnity and attention to green etiquette of these midget golfers under the eye of their mamma, who will doubtless play her round in the afternoon, is an engaging spectacle, not to be witnessed, for lack of opportunity, on any English courses known to me. Gullane course in the dim days when, as a light-hearted cricketer from the far south,

in the company of my young Scotch friends, I first miss-hit gutty balls round it, had just, I think, been increased to fifteen holes.

Those old swan-necked drivers with long springy shafts were much more disconcerting to the player of other games than the stiff-handled short-headed weapon of a later day. I have still a relic of these East Lothian days in the shape of a driver of the most approved type and quality. It appears to strike the modern as a positively uncanny thing. The ball had to be " swept " away with these old implements, not hit. I do not think the system of right arm and tight right-hand grip, followed and successfully so by some tremendous drivers and quite good players, would have been possible with those more exacting clubs. At any rate, I am quite sure that so then unorthodox a style would have created amazement on Gullane Hill in the days of old. In regard to the mother course of this now celebrated group of courses at Gullane, in the early 'seventies I seem to recall it as very little played over upon ordinary days. I can still, however, with the eye of memory see very distinctly one or two couples of well-known local farmers breaking the solitude of the course—one of them particularly, a man of years and repute, in all ways playing a strong game, in a black, low-crowned, chimney-pot hat. I can recall his long swing and easy style with great precision, for the excellent reason that he was the first good performer I had ever watched, and that, too, with the interest of a rather zealous player of other games. It was then the fashion, and for nearly twenty years afterwards, for Englishmen who caught a glimpse of golf in their Scottish journeyings, and of many who had never even done thus much, to condemn it unequivocally as an unthinkable pursuit, though a trifling handful even then

drawn by accident or curiosity to St. Andrews were caught in its toils. I am almost sure, however, none were to be found at North Berwick or anywhere else on the shores of the Firth in those days. For myself, I admit that the very first sight of the game captivated me entirely, and am, on the whole, thankful that the opportunity to wrestle with its elements on the old nine holes at Archerfield, and rarely over the smoother swards of Gullane were not too abundant. For there were other things at that time of life in that country more useful and more spacious and more active to be done. A friend and companion of those days, much longer, and more nearly concerned with them, reminds me that on Saturdays and other holidays players from Edinburgh used to muster in fair strength on Gullane Hill. But these things are, of course, all matters of common knowledge among the initiated. Is there not still the little round tower on the top of the hill, which was once the headquarters of a close society of nine golfers, who just filled it at their prolonged session? The Round-house Club still exists as a somewhat exclusive society, but expanded and detached from its original fortress. Whatever may be the mysteries of initiation to masonry and kindred bodies, I am quite sure they are as child's-play to those exacted in former days of each newly elected member to the liberties of the stone tower on the hill. Firstly, it was ordained that he should take a header into the sea, I think in his clothes, off "Joveys' nuik," a well-known rocky point below the links, and subsequently, by way no doubt of staving off any evil consequences, it was incumbent upon him to drink a bottle of whisky to his own cheek. From a weaker generation and a more inclusive company these tremendous proofs of worth, I need hardly add, are no longer demanded.

Standing to-day on Gullane Hill, where the keen winds wage almost continuous warfare, to the despair of pilgrims from the woody courses and sheltered greens of the gentler south, things indeed have changed. All over the green waste, rolling from Gullane old village to Luffness, and Aberlady Bay, the several courses wind their intricate, be-bunkered, stretched-out lengths, peopled with men and women plying the daily round. The puzzled conies scuttle, and the peewits drubb and

On Gullane Hill.

cry as of yore, when all this was a lonely warren and sheep pasture, and in the lower parts a snipe bog. Over the wide shiny sands of Aberlady Bay, the far-receding tides still race, and in autumn push before them great companies of curlews, knots, dunlins, and oysters-catchers, of greenshanks and black ducks, of plovers, grey and golden, and sandpipers; while from the fields at sunset, just as of old, the wild geese come honking down to swell the nightly clamours of

the shore. As you wait on one of the higher tees with the patience for which popular Scottish links are an admirable school, or, better still, on Sunday, when the golf ball has ceased from troubling, and the non-combatants venture fearlessly out from their lairs into the open, Gullane Hill offers a superb and justly celebrated prospect. For it crowns a point of land from which you can see the whole Firth both up and down, and at close quarters.

Westward beyond Aberlady Bay, and most effectively at evening, when its dark rugged form is reared above the fifteen miles of green and woody shore, Arthur's Seat, with the Pentlands in its rear, springs nobly up against the crimson of a sunset sky. Smoke wreaths curling around its feet and floating out towards Inchkeith significantly mark the Scottish capital, while a blur of broken land and narrowing waters hide the Forth Bridge in the very eye of the setting sun. Those high-rolling hills, the Lomonds of Fife, and its far-stretching village-studded shores, have been before us in familiar fashion again and again in these pages. But here a dozen or so miles across the water, one is placed on almost intimacy with the gracious southern bounds of that ancient kingdom, which, as part of the later realm of Scotland, always seems the complement as it were, in influence and civilisation, if not always in agreement, of the Lothians and the Merse. You can here follow its shores from Burntisland to Fife Ness, where the corner turns and the line of coast runs up to St. Andrews, the other capital of mediæval Scotland. There is nearly always shipping, too, on the Firth, from the red-winged fishing smacks of Leith, to the war vessels of all types that have now their havens here.

Turning inland you have the spaciousness of the Lothian atmosphere to perfection. It seems to matter

little that the foregrounds are geometrical and trim, and lack the mute invitation of most summer landscapes to their fields and woods, when forty miles of the Lammermoors rise and fall in endless waves behind them. Luffness House, embosomed in foliage above the Peffer's mouth, is a seat of the Hopes, partly modernised, but of long story and tradition. The grounds are surrounded by the traces of earthworks and ditches

The First Tee, Gullane.

raised in 1549 by the Scottish General de Thermes, who erected a post here for intercepting supplies on their way to an English garrison then quartered at Haddington. There are remains, too, in a pointed doorway and fragmentary wall of a Carmelite convent. The fishing village of Aberlady, near by, is redolent of old days, and with its many red-tiled roofs is as mellow as the invincible austerity of Scottish architecture permits the hand of time to make it. Aberlady made

up its mind that Napoleon had selected it for his landing place in 1804–5. Nearer Gullane, and on the fringe of the links, is Saltcoats, in former days, like so many of these large farms, a family estate, and the ruinous remains of the old mansion still stand in the fields. The property was granted to one Livingstone in the Middle Ages for killing a wild boar that had wrought havoc in the countryside and defied all its heroes till this one encountered and slew the public enemy. The property remained with his descendants till the eighteenth century, and when it was sold the sword and spear that killed the boar were still in the garret, and were purchased for a trifle by a man in Edinburgh, who bore the family name. They are said to have been hung for some time in Dirleton church. The present ruin is the remains of two square towers, with a living room and a kitchen, a roomy fortified dwelling, built by George Livingstone about 1590. The original pele tower was much older, and before the grant on the wild boar account to the Livingstones, is traditionally said to have belonged to the Knights of Malta. The present condition of the building is due to the fact of its having been used as a quarry in erecting the present steading of Scallcoats farm.

Gullane, a secluded enough village when I first knew it, lying around two expansive greens, with a single inn, which then sufficed for its golfing world, is now a town with a long street of shops, several hotels, and a neighbourhood covered with private houses. Its ancient name was Golyn, and within its parish was the now important village of Dirleton. The remains of a mediæval church in picturesque decay in its midst must arouse ungratified curiosity in many passers-by; a roofless ivy-clad ruin in the middle of an ancient churchyard. A semi-circular Norman arch, dividing

nave from chancel, almost alone survives as an assured fragment of the original twelfth-century building, the remainder being, I believe, of the Reformation period. For the rising importance of the rival village had prevailed, and the church of Golyn was cast down in 1631, and that of Dirleton erected to supply its place. Perhaps, too, the fact that the glebe land was all buried by a sandstorm about this time had something to do with the extinction of its ecclesiastical existence.

It is not surprising that Gullane has very much more than turned the tables on Dirleton in recent years. Half-a-dozen sand courses at its gates, and these only forty minutes from Edinburgh, would alone make the fortune of any place that was given the opportunity and reasonably encouraged by a railroad. But the bright-coloured, rocky shores, with the sandy little golden bays and rolling commons, where the wild flowers rejected of the Lothian farmer find a home, afford everything that can be desired in seaside luxury for young and old; while on the invigorating quality of the breezes it is not necessary to enlarge. There are many charming houses, and bright gardens, too, have been created, in spite of difficulties of wind above, and sand below. It is the most wide-open place conceivable. You seem to see every bit of the sky all the time, at all points of the compass, and for obvious reasons feel every wind that blows equally. Gullane leans, moreover, towards the dry and sunshiny, and the sun, though it does not often cause a man to tear off his clothing, or desire to do so anywhere upon this coast, sheds a singularly radiant light upon land and sea. There are a good few permanent residents, and a greater number who reside for the six summer months, the men folk going to and fro from Edinburgh, while still more, of course, come for briefer holiday periods.

English and even American golfers are constant visitors, and, indeed, it would be hard to name a place where such a variety of courses is offered, and consequently a comparative freedom from overcrowding. The modern championship course of Muirfield adjoins the village, and, unlike the others, is reserved for members. It is said to be almost perfect golf for the scratch or plus player. As it all lies, however, in a single large and rather level enclosure surrounded by a stone wall, its general appearance is uninteresting and artificial in the highest degree.

Dirleton used to boast within the small orbit of its earlier world that it was the prettiest village in Scotland. I see now in slightly modified form, through the medium of the guide-book oracles, that it reiterates the claim to a much wider public. This is not, to be sure, a flight to any great æsthetic heights, but Dirleton, which has not altered a bit, is assuredly a delectable little place. It mostly fronts upon a village green, one side of which is occupied by a hoary fortress of historic fame, beautifully embowered among foliage and gardens kept up with assiduous care for this last half-century. The village dwellings, each in their own gardens, though a trifle formal, look what they are, the creation of a former landlord's pride and care. An admirable old inn, where the little local golf club used in old days to sup once a year, and sup formidably as regards accessories, has the place of honour. The kirk, dignified but unbeautiful, stands retired from the green amid stately timber, and the manse, still occupied by a minister of old celebrity on links and rinks, lurks snugly across the road. The lodge gates of the great house to whose fostering care in the past this pleasant scene is mainly due, open into its midst. The said mansion, Archerfield, a great square pile of Georgian

complexion, stands far back amid luxuriant woods, flanked by deep belts of sombre fir that stretch away to the seashore in dark, solid, rather striking masses. Alongside of them are the links : in the days I have so often alluded to, a rough nine holes, now doubled, and assuredly the most alluring little course in natural texture, and for other reasons, upon the whole coast, though too short for serious rank among them.

Near the adjacent shore the rocky island of Fidra rears itself high above the reef-fretted waves, and is now adorned with an imposing lighthouse. To the east and west are two smaller islands, the Lambie and Ebrochy, while the Bass towers beyond far out at sea. Between village and seashore is a farm that was created out of almost pure sand—hundreds, probably far more, of loads of its soil being exchanged to their mutual benefit with that of a heavy-land farm two miles inland, by the tenant of both. Such was the enterprise of the East Lothian farmer in the great times ! Nevertheless, I well remember the fact that the seeding of the spring corn was always followed by a period of anxiety, lest peradventure a high wind should arise and blow the whole crop—seed, that is to say, top soil and all—into the sea, or into the next parish, before it had taken root, as more than once happened.

Such is Dirleton. But its castle is, of course, the overwhelming attraction, and a favourite resort of golf-widows and orphans, and other visitors from North Berwick. Portions of the towers and walls remain, heavily festooned with ivy and all such kinds of foliage as love to climb and twine about these old memorials of a truculent and bloody age. But some great vaulted chambers on the ground floor are, perhaps, the most interesting feature remaining. The gardens, with their bright display of flowers and beautiful

shaded bowling-green, though of no contemporary significance, provide a most harmonious setting for the old pile, and vastly enhance the charm of the spot. The castle was of considerable importance throughout the whole bloody tale of Scottish history, and was constantly the object of attack or defence in all the wars with England. Originally reared by a Vaux in the thirteenth century, it was one of the castles that resisted Edward I. in 1290, and was captured by Beck, Bishop of Durham.

Dirleton Castle.

In the next century it fell through an heiress to the Haliburtons, and ultimately descended to the Ruthvens, one of whom took part in the murder of Rizzio. James VI. with characteristic timidity took refuge here for some time, when an epidemic was raging in Edinburgh, and at the Gowrie conspiracy in the same reign the Ruthvens forfeited the estates. That sinister being, Logan of Restalrig, whose concern with this business we told of when at Fast Castle, had an eye on Dirleton, as a reward for his service in the event of the plot succeeding. "I care not," he wrote, to its

owner and his fellow-conspirator, "for all the other land I have in the kingdom, if I may grip it [Dirleton], for I esteem it the pleasantest dwelling in Scotland." If he wrote this with the waves raging round him at Fast Castle, one can well understand how his appetite was for the moment whetted. At this Gowrie forfeiture it was granted to Sir Thomas Erskine, who had come, it was said, to the assistance of the king at the critical moment, and was now created Lord Dirleton. During the civil wars the castle was captured by Generals Monk and Lambert, and finally dismantled. In due course it was purchased with the adjoining property by Sir John Nisbet, the most eminent lawyer in Scotland, at the close of the seventeenth century, whence passing in the female line more than once, it is now with the Archerfield estate the property of Mrs. Hamilton Ogilvie.

Scottish, even more than English lawyers, had great facilities through the seventeenth, and yet more through the eighteenth century, for acquiring property and founding families, and they did not miss their opportunities. They were the nabobs of his time, says Ramsay of Ochtertyre, who reports a favourite aphorism of one of them, a comical Lord of Session: "Gear ill-gotten and well-hained will always last against what is well come by but ill guided." Their rival nabobs at the prodigious material rise of Scotland in the eighteenth century were the returned East Indians, and doubtless also some West Indian planters too. However, the fortunes of these last, whether acquired by dubious methods from orientals or by slave labour from Jamaica and Barbadoes, were, at least, clear increment to their native country. That the intricacy of Scottish law and the dumfoundering phraseology in which it revelled alone placed the

hapless layman caught in its toil at some peculiar disadvantage we can well believe. Moreover, the fact of land being almost the only security for ready money, prior to Scotland's industrial awakening, turned lawyers into lairds even more frequently than in the sister kingdom. Indeed, Sir Walter himself makes no little play on this subject, as we all know, and is never happier than with those humoursome, long-winded limbs of the law he has so inimitably painted.

North Berwick, in the ears of the world at large, simply stands for golf, with the biggest of G's. Vaguely mixed up with Berwick-on-Tweed, it may be, and indeed I well know is, but as regards its supposed *raison d'être* there is no confusion whatever. And this may seem rather curious, since till comparatively recent times it had only a nine-hole course. St. Andrews, as everybody knows, is in itself a place of high distinction. North Berwick has structurally no distinction whatever. A hard, sombre little fishing town, with the scant relics of an abbey, a due share of the ruggedly picturesque though low-lying East Lothian seacoast, and a fine view of the Bass and the Law is about all that there is to be said for it. That whole streets of detached and handsome villas, and a mile or more of even imposing residences scattered along the seaboard have sprung up within my memory, is a fact of little abstract interest. It used to be a modest but popular seaside resort from Edinburgh, and though still no doubt on intimate terms with the capital, has now a far wider appeal. It has a slightly aristocratic flavour, and is supported by the usual three classes of well-to-do folk—the permanent resident, the summer resident, and the holiday visitor. Its better houses, like those of Gullane, let furnished at handsome rents—always by the month be it remembered, and not by

the week as in England. All well-to-do southern Scotland, who have not their own holiday houses, go to the sea for one month or for two months, never for five, seven, or nine weeks. It would be impossible—they could not be accommodated; it would upset the letting arrangements of every house in the place. At Gullane, for instance, the whole floating population depart on July 31st, and an entirely new set come in till August 31st, when another general post takes place. In apartments it is just the same. Unmindful of this idiosyncrasy of Scottish life, I once scoured the far-expanded streets and terraces of Dunbar, in a vain attempt to engage rooms for, say August 20th, for a fortnight. But the dates, I soon discovered, were impossible. There were plenty of rooms, and plenty of willing landladies, but those who were empty, and those who soon would be, expected to let on September 1st for a month, and preferred the bird on the bush to that in the hand. I came at last to realise that my proposition was regarded as almost uncanny. If a whole nation does the same, I suppose it is all right, and you get used to it. But if unaccustomed to map out your time by lunar months, it comes as something of a shock to be regarded by landladies as almost a suspicious character for the mere expression of a desire to stay at a seaside, or indeed, for that matter, at an inland resort, from the 20th of July or August for a fortnight or three weeks. Hotels and the like, it is needless to add, are not run on these cast-iron principles.

The original golf club of North Berwick was formed in 1832, and consisted of fifty members elected from all over the district. But the course belongs to the corporation, like most others in Eastern Scotland, and is free to anyone at the usual payment—2s. a day in this case. The eighteen or twenty handicap man, as

I have before remarked, generally selects a crowded course, so long as it is a famous one, and what satisfaction he derives from this method of procedure still remains, so far as I know, a secret locked in his own breast. The etiquette of the Scottish links is so rigid and the manners are so admirable, that even when he habitually plays with his wife, who receives half a stroke from him, the infelicity of his selection remains quite possibly concealed from his eyes. The North Berwick course is much congested in summer, and constitutes, I believe, a popular stamping ground for these misguided souls from all parts of the country. That no ordinary calculation, even of an initiated and discreet person, can render it safe to walk about on, I had speedy and sufficient proof. But there is really nothing more to be said about a green so celebrated in golfing literature, unless, perhaps, to note that a second course has been opened within the last few years. The little harbour and the rocks about it are characteristic of the coast, and the Bass here displays itself superbly a mile or so from the shore, though the only access to it is by a small steam launch, which plies from Canty Bay, two miles eastward of the town, and has, I believe, a monopoly of the traffic. I was unable to revisit it, owing to the incessant wind; for the difficulty of landing in the single available spot is such that the trip is only feasible in calm weather.

The shape of the rock, which rises 320 feet out of the waves, is singularly imposing, and its sides are wholly precipitous, save where its broad back shelves down into the sea at the landing-place. The interests are manifold, and cover the centuries. Zoologically the thousands of solan geese or gannets, which have found an immemorial home in its inaccessible cliffs, make the rock in this particular unique. In old times these birds

were accounted a delicacy, figured upon the tables of kings, and fetched a high price in the market, though rejected by the modern palate. The education of the young birds is conducted on heroic principles. Stuffed to repletion by the parents with poddlies, a species of cole-whiting which abounds in these seas, they become encased in a thick coat of fat, and in due course are hefted unceremoniously out of their nest, to fall into the sea below. Here they are supported without upon the waves, and nourished within by their own obesity, till their wings and natural instincts develop sufficiently to start life in earnest. The birds, with whose nests the cliff ledges are crowded in the breeding-season, are of course protected, the rock being private property. Its history commences, like that of most such storm-beaten islands, with a sixth-century saint—in this case St. Baldred, of notable name among the missionaries of the north. He is said to have died here, and considering that to this day the lighthouse people are sometimes confined to the Rock for weeks together, one can well believe that this one, like so many others on the coast of Britain, received the parting breath of the saints who frequented them. Local nomenclature on the mainland still recalls the wonder of St. Baldred's miracles. The Bass is indelibly associated, and for all time, with the name of the famous family of Lauder. Though so prolific and tenacious a breed that I have seen somewhere a list of thirty and odd estates in South-Eastern Scotland, held in old days by different branches of the stock, the Lauders of the Bass stand apart and by themselves, being also—though I tremble as I make this statement, so ramified is the Lauder lineage—identical with the Lauders of Lauder, whom we shall meet anon. The first Lauder of the Bass became so by virtue of his heroic support of William Wallace,

the Rock being granted him by the Bishop of St. Andrews, together, no doubt, with that territory on the mainland which his descendants held with it. His son was a devoted follower of Bruce, and was one of the plenipotentiaries who signed the treaties both of 1323 and 1327. The family kept a grip of it, rejecting the money overtures, and defying all other attempts of the Stuart kings to get hold of it, till very near the time when it was purchased for the Crown in the reign of Charles II. Valueless financially but for the gannets, it must have been strategically a fine asset to a Scottish family in the everlasting struggle to keep place and property. A chronicler of the house tells us that the family only summered there in times of peace, living otherwise upon the mainland. They were all buried in the old church of North Berwick, which has been gradually consumed by the sea, till now there is but a fragment of it left upon the sand. A flat stone in the centre of the green, near the old almost vanished twelfth-century church, still marked the hereditary burying-ground of the Lauders of the Bass eighty years ago, since which the encroaching sea has obliterated the spot.

The Lauders shone both as churchmen and ambassadors. They provided Scotland with several bishops, and were frequently governors of Berwick when it was in Scottish hands. It was Sir Robert Lauder, "our Loveit of the Bass," as James III. calls him, who had to conduct those waggon loads of pence, eight horses to a load, in which Edward IV. sent the Queen's marriage portion, through the rutty tracks of Lothian. The most eventful incident upon the Rock during the long occupation of the Lauders, was the month's sojourn there of James, son of Robert III. of Scotland, on his way to France for his education.

Eventful, because it was after sailing from there that he was captured by the English, and detained in the south for nineteen years. James's acquaintance with the Bass probably suggested the idea to him of its unequalled advantage, from other points of view. For it was he who first made use of it as a prison.

But its notoriety as a prison-house is, of course, associated with the Covenanters, for whose benefit the Government of Charles II. especially purchased it. Every good Presbyterian takes his hat off to the Bass, or is expected to. The grim heroes who inspired the resistance to the attempts of Charles and Lauderdale to impose the Anglican Church, and particularly bishops, upon Scotland, were herded into the unwholesome and gloomy prison, whose remains still speak vividly to those who have read the blood-curdling accounts of the "martyrs of the Bass." The Revolution of 1688 liberated such of them as survived out of the thirty or forty who were here immured, and replaced them, as was only just, with some of their former persecutors. And now ensued by far the most dramatic episode in its whole story. Four of Claverhouse's late officers were imprisoned, or one should perhaps say detained, here, for they were obviously at large in June 1691. On one occasion, when the small garrison were outside the fortified wall which defended the only accessible point, loading coal, these Jacobite prisoners shut the gates on them, and were thus in possession of the rock. They were joined by three or four ardent spirits, and, having possession of the guns, were practically secure from any attack that the authorities at Edinburgh could make upon them. Thus the situation remained for months, and its sensational nature attracted other enthusiasts for King James, till the garrison rose to sixteen men. They had boats and were able without

difficulty to seize provisions on different parts of the coast. On one occasion a small Danish ship, quite ignorant of the situation, came within close range of the guns, and was seized and plundered. For two years the Government could do nothing but keep watch on the opposite shore.

At last they despatched two small war vessels and another craft to watch the island more closely ; but a French frigate came to the rescue and drove them away. A man who had supplied the rebels with provisions was captured, and, as a terrible example, was hanged on the mainland, in full view of the rock ; but its defenders scattered the attendant crowd by a well-directed shot into their midst. Eventually, however, renewed efforts by the Government to cut off supplies began to tell, and at length impending starvation forced Middleton, their leader, to offer terms. The envoys sent to discuss them, however, were entertained as if supplies were no object, and contrivances arranged to make the garrison appear much stronger than it was. Ultimately, after holding out for three years, and by far the latest piece of British soil to yield to King William, the Rock was surrendered. The garrison received their lives and freedom, and the best of terms, as well as an uncommon meed of admiration from the whole Jacobite world. The works on the Bass were soon after this demolished, and about 1706 the Crown sold it to Sir Hew Dalrymple, a great lawyer, whose descendants still own it, together with the property on the mainland which doubtless was the cause of the island purchase. At the end of Quality Street a spacious old house with pleasant grounds relieves the sombreness of one old portion of the little town, and has been usually a second residence of the Dalrymple family, their country seat of Luchie being in the near neighbourhood.

The old Cistercian nunnery of North Berwick, founded in the twelfth century, was a house of some importance. Several successive prioresses were Homes of Polwarth and elsewhere, and James VI. seems to have handed over the whole property to that family, who must have had on this account, and for lands and favours no doubt bestowed by them, more title to it than usually existed in the shameless scramble. The Scottish nobility, however, would have been more than human if they had foregone their opportunities, after the example shown them by their neighbours. And Heaven knows there was nothing superhuman about the Scottish nobility of that day, unless it was the activity they showed in keeping the pot of State perpetually seething. But scant remains of the two gable ends and other fragments standing near the present station are left of a house whose forgotten glories Scott has caused to glimmer again in the deathless pages of *Marmion*. The scene at the priory, when Fitz Eustace takes the unwilling Clara from the train of the Abbess of Whitby into the toils of the hated Marmion at Tantallon, will be one of familiar memory.

The parish church that was in use in my day is now a ruin, deserted for a new one, but as a seventeenth-century building it calls for no comment. Of the original parish church at the foot of Quality Street, where the Lauders of the Bass were buried, nothing remains but the porch and the font. It seems to have been used as a quarry for the surrounding buildings. The promontory on which it stands was in former days disconnected with the shore at high tide, and the interval crossed by a stone bridge. This inconvenience seems to have been the cause of its abandonment for the seventeenth-century church now in its turn deserted. Seven miles out at sea is the low-lying rock, a mile in

length, so conspicuous an object at the entrance of the Firth, and carrying an important lighthouse. My own recollections of a choppy passage to the Isle of May, long ago, are too vague for serious recall, even if it were worth it. There is nothing of interest but the fragments of a chapel, indicative of the invariable ecclesiastical associations and significance of such islands with monastic houses. In remote times, oddly enough, the island belonged to the Abbey of Reading; and in later ones, James IV., who was an indomitable sportsman, used to go there in a boat to shoot wild fowl.

On the Links, North Berwick.

North Berwick Law has of necessity provoked a word of notice here and there on various pages of this book, as it is so aggressively visible from everywhere, and whether from afar or near, so suggestive of a freak of nature. One knows of many "Sugar loaves" in Britain, detached from hill or mountain ranges. But this one has no remote affinity with any range. It shoots up without any apparent reason from a virtually level and extremely trim country of wheat and oats and turnips and potatoes, to a sharp point nearly seven hundred feet high, that in mere form would reflect no discredit on the Snowdon range, and put to shame any hill on the Cheviots or the Lammer-

moors. The Bass, like a huge mastodon squatting on the deep, is remarkable enough. The great whale-backed Traprain is singularly isolated, though not extraordinarily out of place. But North Berwick Law, which I always think of as the central figure of these three curiosities that gaze across at one another, is far the most uncanny. Witches astride of broom-sticks flew over it, of course, as thickly as modern aeroplanes, and among its various traditions is a curious legend, embalmed in a later ballad, from which it appears that a Borthwick at one time owned the Law, and

> "Abode in his seaward tower
> Which looketh on to the German Sea,
> A wild and lonely bower."

He possessed a lovely daughter, for whose favour Willie o' Cockburnspath, and Murray o' Marshall were competitors to the death. Just as they had arranged to settle the matter at the sword's point, or at any rate settle which should not have her, the proud parent, hearing of their intention, intervened on behalf of his daughter's outspoken preference for the Cockburnspath hero, but only on the outrageous condition that the young man should first carry his prospective bride to the top of the Law, without letting down his burden. The desperate struggles of the gallant with his fair burden, whose weight we have no means of estimating, as he nears the top are graphically described. When at last, by superhuman efforts, he achieves the feat, his "heart bursts" with the strain, and he falls dead upon the summit, and the lady goes mad.

> "There's a green grave on North Berwick Law,
> And a maniac comes and sings,
> And with the burden of her song
> The valley 'neath her rings."

The coast rises beyond North Berwick into tolerable cliffs, and upon the brink of one of them, just beyond Canty Bay, stands the mighty ruin of Tantallon, that for distinction of pose as a coast stronghold, is only inferior to Welsh Harlech and English Bamborough.

Though little more than a shell within, the height and length of this, its curtain walls, spreading upon the landward side from a central keep to two massive drum towers at the corners have a most imposing effect; the more so as Scottish castles, numerous though they be, are seldom large. Most people, perhaps, would come to Tantallon in an exacting frame of mind, for the very flavour of its name will be either vaguely or definitely significant of mighty men and great doings, and they will not be disappointed. Only one side was vulnerable, the others falling abruptly to the rocky shore. The wide green pasture over which you approach the fortress on the landward side exposes its whole front elevation to great advantage, as well as the form and circuit of the outer defences and ramparts. As you cross the inner moat up to the gateway, where the falling portcullis, it will be remembered, grazed the tail of Lord Marmion's horse, as he dashed for the rising drawbridge, the bloody heart of the Douglases confronts you upon the wall. The keep, through which entry is made, is practically a shell open to the top. Inside this and the high curtain walls, a large grassy area, once the inner court, and encroached upon, no doubt, with buildings, spreads to the verge of the cliff—

> "Above the booming ocean leant
> The far-projecting battlement,
> The billows burst in ceaseless flow
> Upon the precipice below."

Battlements and buildings have long vanished, and

a broad lawn, with the deep castle well in its centre, opens a fair and verdant terrace to the sea, which rumbles amid the jagged red rocks far below. Upon the north side only is the remains of a single building, generally held to have been the banqueting hall. As a fortress, Tantallon dates back to the twelfth century. It comes into the broader page of history, however, when the Douglases first acquired it in the fourteenth century. In the next one, however, the long struggle which this arrogant and ambitious house waged against the Stuarts for the throne of Scotland, to their ultimate discomfiture, found them stripped of all their possessions. Tantallon, however, remained with the name, as it was granted to the only bearer of it, the Red Douglas, who remained loyal to the king. Much more familiar to posterity, however, was another Douglas, Lord of Tantallon, Archibald Bell-the-Cat, otherwise Earl of Angus, who inherited in 1479. His advice to James IV., while camped on Flodden Edge, to return while there was yet time, and not to court either disaster or a bloody unprofitable victory, and how James rejected it with such ill-considered words that the irascible old man went back then and there to Tantallon in high dudgeon, is, of course, a famous passage in history. Two of his sons, however, and two hundred of his followers, fell on that fatal field. Another became Bishop of Dunkeld, and wrote much poetry, including a translation of the *Æneid*. Another, who became Earl of Angus, and head of the house, married his late sovereign's widow, Henry the Eighth's sister, and mother of the infant King James V., causing thereby no end of subsequent trouble. True to the instincts of his stock, and further stimulated by his connection with the Crown, Angus would be satisfied with nothing less than the supreme control of Scotland. Ultimately

young James and his stepfather came to blows, and there was another Stuart-Douglas war. The king came himself to Tantallon, with all those big guns with untoward names dear to the later Scottish kings, and not famous, it must be added, for effective shooting.

The royal guns, at any rate, frightened Angus out of Tantallon by the back stairway which the sea offered, whence he sailed to England. They do not seem to have damaged the ten-foot-thick walls of the castle seriously, as the king eventually purchased its surrender. The Earl of Bothwell was now entered as Lord of Tantallon and its domains, but his loyalty was of short duration, and ultimately Angus came back from England, was reinstated, and acted as his brother-in-law King Henry's representative in those schemes of his for marrying the infant Mary to his son, and uniting the kingdoms. James V. was dead, Arran was Regent, and Cardinal Beaton in high favour and influence. It was that brief day, too, when a Catholic Scotland shuddered at the English heresies, and in any case profoundly suspected English schemes, even when statesmanlike and well-intended as these perhaps were. Sadler, Henry's English envoy, found things getting so hot for him, that he was glad to retire to Tantallon, while the irascible king at last lost patience, and proceeded characteristically to vent his rage on those whom smoother measures could not win. He threw over Angus and his Scotch friends, and flung his raiding parties into Scotland under Eure, and in destroying Melrose Abbey, destroyed at the same time the Douglas mausoleum. This maddened Angus and the Douglases, who had their revenge at Ancrum Moor, where Pittscottie says the charge of the Scottish army was like the roaring of the sea.

The Douglases held Tantallon till the end of the

seventeenth century. In the meantime it had been besieged by the Covenanters, and captured from the Douglas of that day, who held strong prelatic sympathies. General Monk appears to be responsible for its ultimate abandonment to the bats and owls, owing to the condition in which he left it after a fortnight's bombardment. It was soon afterwards purchased by Sir Hew Dalrymple, that same eminent jurist who acquired North Berwick and the Bass, and still remains the property of his descendants. The castle is well looked after, and is naturally the resort of numbers of visitors and of picnic parties, upon whose cheerful festivities its grey walls, redolent of unquenchable ambitions, of intrigue, arrogance, and boundless pride, look down in grim significance. The clean sweep of the interior buildings, the naked simplicity of the huge walls and gutted towers, which may be ascended by partially repaired staircases, leave the mind of the visitor free to follow its fancy into the truculent days of old. He will not be called upon to undergo the mental torture—for I am sure it *is* torture to many persons of sensibility without the architectural instinct—of following the intricacies, traced by little more than their foundations, of ward-rooms, soldiers' quarters, chapels, banqueting halls, kitchens, store-rooms, and the like. These are not everybody's hobby, though they weigh on the conscience of many who would like to be quiet and dream dreams. Instead of this they feel bound to worry over ground-plans, and wrestle with measurements, and hang upon the lips of a conscientious custodian, all of which intricacies fade into thin air when they have paid him their shilling, and walked forth again into a twentieth-century world.

But at Tantallon the visitor may with a free conscience give himself up to the influence of the spot,

unharassed by fragmentary details that, it must be admitted, are at times distracting—almost prosaic. He can feel, at least, the sombre shadow of the mighty walls, and, soothed by the low roar of the waves beneath, can muse, if he is equipped to do so, on the strangeness of this old forgotten world, which lay practically at the mercy of the owners of such fearsome piles as this. For a race as ready to serve two masters as was this branch of the House of Douglas; an eyrie that swept as does this one the great wide-open mouth of the Firth of Forth from St. Abb's to the point of Fife; that offered an impregnable front to the land and commanded the sea upon its rear, was ideal. This upstanding bit of coast, after leaving Tantallon and turning southwards, gives way in due course to the flats of the Tyne estuary, beyond which the traveller can get one more distant glimpse of the old town of Dunbar; its woody hinterland, for such at this distance it appears, rolling back to the dark wall of the Lammermoors, while far away upon the seaward horizon, one behind the other, the lofty capes of St. Abb's peninsula fall abruptly into the deep.

Here as elsewhere the foreground will make scant appeal to the average pilgrim. In no long time, however, these waving parallelograms that enclose the highest achievements of agriculture, give way to what two centuries ago was held with good reason as one of the greatest triumphs of forestry in the north. But before reaching the Tynninghame woods, the fine old pre-Reformation church of Whitekirk, standing high above some cross-roads and a small hamlet, in a spacious and leafy churchyard, is passed by no one, and, indeed, is in itself an object of pilgrimage to numbers in a country so despoiled of its ecclesiastical monuments as this. A massive, red sandstone tower,

with a heavily corbelled parapet of late thirteenth-century date, rises high above a long low body, consisting of nave and chancel, built mostly in 1439, while the porch is apparently of the same period. The building would, I fancy, disconcert the southern ecclesiologist at many points, but is interesting in its very seeming discrepancies as they are the work of ancient and reverent hands, not of eighteenth-century heritors and their masons. The east end has plain step gables and a circular window, above which is an armorial bearing which I could not decipher, and is, I believe, a mystery. To the north of the church is a large tithe barn, a very rare survival in Scotland, at the west end of which was once a pele tower. The minister tells me that this is thought to have been the building which sheltered the pilgrims to the shrine.

The origin of the church is interesting. There was a famous holy well here in mediæval times, which has now vanished. When Edward I. in 1294 was pursuing his victorious career through the Lothians, Black Agnes, Countess of Dunbar, fearing capture in that stronghold, took ship for Fife, but so severely injured herself in embarking that she was forced to land on Tynninghame Bay. Being here in great agony, and fearful of the English war parties, she was altogether in a bad way, till a hermit appeared and persuaded her to drink of this well, a proceeding which healed her bruises instantly. So on the first possible opportunity, having proclaimed the miracle far and wide, she built and endowed a church upon the holy spot. From henceforward the number of pilgrims to the well and shrine from all parts was prodigious, as many as 15,000 coming in a single year. Adam Hepburn of Hailes added a stone arched choir in 1439, but at the Reformation the pilgrim houses, of which there appear to

have been many, were pounced upon by a neighbouring laird, one Sinclair, who used the material for his own purposes. These details and many more were gathered by the late Sir David Baird of Newbyth close by, from a MS. in the Vatican Library, which concludes its account with a lament that the shrine was "beat to pieces, and that holy church shared the fate of many more, and was made a parochial church for the preaching of heresy, and by them called Whitekirk." Presby-

Whitekirk.

terianism has always been accounted, and, indeed, has always accounted itself a democratic persuasion. The southern Anglican, however, who has seen the glories of the old-time squire's pew practically swept away by general consent, would be amazed at the spacious dignity which still attaches in some Scottish kirks to the laird's spiritual conveniences. At Whitekirk three large landowners are thus seated in hereditary glory. The Tynninghame family have a roomy carpeted gallery, furnished with some fine old chairs that the beadle

informed me were 200 years old. The house of Newbyth have a raised pew, running right across the east end, where the altar would stand in an Anglican church—a pew of most conspicuous dignity that would almost seem intended for a whole company of deans and canons.

Tynninghame woods, which cover 800 acres along the shore of the Tyne estuary, are threaded by drives, and are a great source of pleasure to the visitors and others from Dunbar, North Berwick, and elsewhere. Historically they are of singular interest. For their planting coincides with the very dawn of Scottish rural enterprise, and was the first sign of what Scotsmen, then accounted backward and slothful in such matters, could do if they tried. The sixth Earl of Haddington was the pioneer in question, and Chambers tells us that his wife was the inspiring angel, the young man being hitherto wholly given over to sport, while his lady was devoted to trees. This enterprising young woman, a daughter of Lord Hopetoun, thought her husband might make better use of his time, and converted him even to enthusiasm. Three hundred acres of wind-smitten, sandy soil were first planted, to the entertainment, it seems, of the whole countryside. But the laugh lay with his lordship and his zealous lady, when the trees throve far beyond even their expectations, and now, after 200 years, are represented by a portion of that fine seacoast forest known as Binning Wood. After more planting Lord Haddington took up agriculture, which in the reign of Anne and the first George, was dimly dawning as an industry worthy of the name in Scotland. He planted belts of trees to break the force of the harsh winds that strike the East Lothian coast, and imported farmers from Dorsetshire to instruct the natives. "From these," he says, "we came to a

knowledge of sowing and the management of grass seeds." The notion of East Lothian going to school with Dorsetshire might well have made the Hopes and Hendersons, the Skirvings and Wilsons of a later day rub their eyes, and East Lothian even then was less primitive than the rest of the Lowlands.

But as regards the Tynninghame woods, 400 more acres of even worse land than the first planting were next ventured upon, on the strength of the utterance of a German visitor, to the effect that he had seen as worthless land growing fine timber in Germany. Though this tract was practically bottomless sand, producing nothing but rabbits and whins, the experiment, to the amazement of the country, and the joy of this enterprising couple, succeeded as well as the other, and completed the stretch of forest, that may well be the pride of their descendants and the delight of visitors. For Scotland, at the time these woods were planted, was the nakedest land in Europe, and allusion has already been made to the astonishment at its treeless surface expressed by English and foreign visitors. As regards the agricultural awakening which went hand-in-hand with the new zeal for afforestation, Ramsay of Ochtertyre gives great weight as an epoch-making date in this transformation to the Jacobite rebellion of 1745;—not merely because it roughly synchronised with the general commencement of effort, or, at least, of good intentions, but itself contributed indirectly to the movement in the Lowlands. Wolfe, when he was a young major and colonel policing the Highlands after the Rebellion, wrote thence to a friend that a load of blackmail amounting to over £30,000 a year had been lifted from the shoulders of the lairds and farmers bordering on the Western Highlands. I recall the letter, which I have read in the original, for what it is

worth. But if Wolfe's figures were approximately correct, the burden, even spread along an extended frontier, must have been vexatious indeed, and at the hands of what this unsympathetic and disrespectful young Whig stigmatises as "common thieves." This, however, is parenthetical; for whatever the measure of this tax, it was not the relief from it, which must have been achieved a little earlier, but the wider opening of the Highland markets, and the increasing demand in England for their black cattle, that was the contributing factor to the improvement of Lowland agriculture. For the Lowlands were a half-way house to the southern markets. The forming of enclosures for feeding and harbouring the transient herds not only improved a vast amount of land but opened the eyes of the lairds and others to the value of stock for tillage purposes.

Ramsay's own property was in the Carse of Stirling, and his experiences, personal or at first hand—information from older men, for which he had the keenest scent—virtually cover the eighteenth century. From the outer darkness of almost agricultural barbarism, that is to say, to much more than the dawn of light. Indeed to vast accomplishments, and to the lifting of rent-rolls by material improvements, and the growth of intelligence, in some cases from £200 to £5000 a year! He gives us a vivid picture, the more vivid because set down in such simple matter-of-fact style, of the Lowlands generally in the earlier part of the century. The run-rigg system is still in full swing: sour, undrained, unprolific lands, miserable crops, cultivated with archaic home-made wooden implements, dragged by straw ropes, sometimes actually tied to the tails of emaciated horses. He shows us a peasantry and tenantry immovably wedded to their pristine ways, darkly suspicious of any innovations, above all, if

they came from England, in which country the travelled Scotsman saw what then appeared an agricultural paradise that filled him with despair.

Then he draws a picture of the gradual awakening, giving the names, the characters, and the idiosyncrasies of the various lairds who, returning from the south, took off their coats—in one or two cases even literally—to fight the darkness, the sloth, the prejudice in matters pertaining to the soil. Fletcher of Saltoun, who was, of course, himself a great improver, as he was many other things at this period, wrote, though with probable hyperbole, that there were 200,000 mendicants in the Scotland of his day.

It hardly needs Ramsay's evidence to realise that want of money was the great crux, a mortgage being almost the only expedient, and the Scotch laird must have waxed pretty shy by that time of mortgages, lawyers, and their intolerable prolixities. But he tells how money began to pour into Scotland from outside sources after the middle of the century, and marvellously oiled the wheels of agricultural progress. He has many good stories, too, about the enthusiasm, and sometimes misdirected ventures of the "improving" lairds, some of whom were enriched lawyers, making amends, as it were, to a country on whose poverty they had battened. As too self-confident persons nowadays farming in a strange country proverbially fail to make allowance for strange conditions, so many of these zealous Scotch lairds overlooked the physical and climatic contrasts of Hertfordshire and the Lothians. But with all these inevitable blunders they did magnificent work. English ploughmen and bailiffs were imported, while the elementary but effective treatment of liming the sour lands increased with leaps and bounds. Enclosures, the use of clover

and artificial grasses, draining, and finally the introduction of turnips, all followed. The more intelligent tenants and hinds, with the natural shrewdness of their race, which circumstances had kept agriculturally dormant, conquered in time their aversion to novelties and English importations and responded to the situation. "Often," says Ramsay, "they became rather partners with their masters than mere payers of rent, which was mainly in those days paid in kind." Many humorous situations were created, which the laird of Ochtertyre, with all his powers of practical observation, relates with relish. One "improving" laird, hitherto such a book-worm that his health had suffered from confinement, took the agricultural fever violently. He dropped his books, as well as all intercourse with his neighbours, and took to the field himself in a fustian frock, and even ate his meals under a dyke in company with his men. On Sundays only he washed and dressed and became himself again. He imported English labourers and all his implements, "and it was a sight," says Ramsay, "to see wheeled waggons (for tumbrels with solid wheels had been the vogue) with five or six sightly horses drawing his crops to market." "In spite of many and inevitable blunders," says our author, "he became one of the most spirited and skilful cultivators in the country. His management grew judicious and his crops admirable." The end of the story is notorious, though Ramsay scarcely lived to see its fruition. For in the nineteenth century, the pupil passed the master, and the latter came eventually to sit at his feet. A frequent aphorism of the Lothian farmer, which may be quoted for what it is worth, attributes the comparative inferiority of English farming to the lowness of rents, the stimulus to skill and energy being, in his opinion, consequently lacking.

It is at least interesting for one half of the world to hear what the other half thinks about it. The laird in old Scotland was probably, as a plainer-living and poorer man, more intimately identified with the tillage of his land and with his tenants than his southern equivalent. Just the very converse, as regards the Lowlands, has undoubtedly been the case in the last hundred years. Ramsay tells a good story of the tenant on an "old-fashioned estate," who always interceded for the laird at grace before meat, but when

East Lothian and the Lammermoors from Gullane Hill.

his rent was doubled immediately dropped that clause in the peroration. If any southern reader of these pages should think it worth while on the next opportunity to notice the plains of Lothian from the northern mail; if any golfing pilgrim to North Berwick or Gullane should peradventure devote that seventh day leisure, which the custom of the country enforces on him, to a run through the neighbourhood, he will see a sight as a whole nowhere else to be seen. When Mr. Balfour,

while pleading in a recent speech in the House of Commons for cautious legislative interference with Lothian lands, alluded to them as displaying the finest agriculture in the world, not one probably in fifty of his hearers understood the significance of the truism the laird of Whittinghame was uttering. It is a startling reflection that the grandfathers of the men who created this country, much as we see it to-day, hitched wooden-toothed harrows and primeval ploughs to their horses' tails, and ofttimes pulled thistles from their lean grain crops to serve their half-starved animals in lieu of green food. Long after the middle of the eighteenth century, writes another authority, the whole of East Lothian was open field, much of the land on rundale and divided among many tenants, who resided together in clusters of mean huts called a town. Neither summer fallowing nor sown grasses, nor turnips, were generally known. The labourers, says the same writer, were shockingly housed, and more particularly on great estates, and very liable to sickness, particularly ague. Oatmeal porridge had not, by then at any rate, the hold it had acquired in some other parts of Scotland. Pease bannocks, horribly unpalatable, though nutritious, were a staple diet in the Lothians and Berwickshire, while barley scones were a luxury. Potatoes proved an immense boon, being of fine quality, and associated as they were with the improving diet which in other respects soon followed.

CHAPTER XIV

UPPER LAUDERDALE

LAUDERDALE is in Berwickshire, but it is a region unto itself, and justifies on this account the geographical ambiguity of our narrative. It is the western flank of the county, running north and south, and is cut off from the Merse proper by spurs of the Lammermoors, and by the stretch of half-tamed, high, thin country, we touched about Gordon and Greenlaw. It is more easy of access, too, by road from that corner of East Lothian to the west of Haddington, and thence over the striking pass of Soutra, which has a fine road, and is indeed an Anglo-Scottish highway. By train it is rather more easily reached from Edinburgh than from Berwick, *via* the line to Galashiels and Melrose, primitive though the tortuous and leisurely little railroad is, by which the old borough of Lauder has within recent years attached itself to this through route down the Gala valley. More, however, than all these topographical conditions in determining the order of our movements here, which after all matters nothing, is the fact that I spent most of the latter end of my long revisitation of these counties in Lauderdale. Lastly, this region, so far as I was concerned, both gained and lost something, inasmuch as it was entirely new ground to me, and offered none of those fatal temptations to reminiscent philandering. As this is not a guide book, and under no obligations whatever of that

nature, I shall say nothing about the Mid-Lothian or Edinburgh side of the county of Haddington. Preston-

Borthwick Castle.

pans, with its battlefield around the railway station and its monument to Gardiner, verges on the Tranent coalfields; while apart from these disfiguring features

on a landscape undistinguished of itself, the immense material growth of Edinburgh within a generation or two has thrust out buildings of an industrial character far into the Mid-Lothian country, that not long ago was at least rural.

The last ten miles of rail or road approach to the Scottish capital from this side were never inspiring. But they are now almost depressing—from the train assuredly so—and painfully out of harmony with the striking qualities that when once within its bounds stamp the modern Athens as one of the most beautiful cities in the world. The more inland portions of West Haddingtonshire and Mid-Lothian towards the hills are free of all unsightly enterprises below or above ground, and are distinguished by the high-water mark of Lothian agriculture interspersed with stately and often historic country seats entrenched amid noble woods. But rich as they are in historic memories, it is not amiss, perhaps, that the exigencies of space compel us to climb the Soutra Pass, to enjoy the three or four miles of level open solitary moorland the highway traverses at a height of a thousand or so feet, and drop down the folding hills to where the piping voice of the infant Leader proclaims the head of Lauderdale. Or we might follow the more normal alternative and take train from Edinburgh, breaking the brief journey with profit at Gorebridge, where, having admired the fine dominating pose of the old tower of Borthwick, restored and occupied by the present owner of that name and race, we might proceed on foot by tortuous ways to the great high-perched ruins of Crichton Castle. Borthwick, among other memorabilia in its long story, was the refuge, till driven out of it, of Bothwell and Queen Mary on their flight to Dunbar. Skilfully converted to present use from floor to lofty

battlement, without any structural alteration from the ancient form, it stands above a gorge through which the railroad runs, and the infant streams of the

Crichton Castle.

Mid-Lothian Esk fret their way. Crichton, as Scott, who was greatly attached to the spot, reminds the reader—

> "Rises on the steep
> Of the green vale of Tyne;
> And far beneath where slow they creep
> From pool to eddy still and deep,
> Where alders moist and willows weep,
> You hear her streams repine."

For this is near the source of the East Lothian Tyne. Both castles are in Mid-Lothian, and from both, their owners—a Borthwick, then eighty years of age, and a Hepburn—marched to Flodden and the grave. From Fountainhall Station, just beyond, where the Gala

Water is already making merry music in its narrow meadowy vale, a little railroad of recent construction burrows away through a labyrinth of high grassy moorish hills, keeping company in their deep clefts with roaring burns, that till lately must have lifted up their voices in profound seclusion. Three or four times a day, however, the little train now accomplishes its five miles of rather laborious pilgrimage, through these pastoral solitudes at the leisurely rate of ten miles an hour. But the progress is spasmodic, interludes of agony followed by hilarious rushes. I seem to remember the guard getting down to open a gate somewhere. But it is all very picturesque. At the close of the quite unconventional ride in a train, the traveller will find himself landed in the leafy outskirts of Lauder, the little capital of the upper half of Lauderdale, and Lauder will, I think, captivate him if not at first, certainly at second, sight. It is emphatically an old-world, dead-alive, slumberous country town, "side tracked," as the Americans would say, and, I believe, almost regrets the new railroad, since its leading industry, that of taking its own citizens and a few summer visitors over tremendous hills to the main line and back, has been destroyed. It is even picturesque in itself, after a severe stony northern fashion, with a single wide silent street, and a town-hall standing in the midst of it. No trade other than an occasional stock market goes forward in Lauder, so the serried ranks of grey or brown houses flush with the wide street upon either side, a few of which are absent-minded-looking shops, have a resigned and restful look about them. Lauder is really delightful, and I never thought I could ever come to lavish such an epithet on a Scottish country town. Some are prosperous, some are neat, many are dour; but Lauder,

though sombre in a way too, and without a touch in its whole long street of colour, foliage, or architectural amenity, is nevertheless a place of character, and quite obviously one of traditions, where racy things other than mere Border fighting have happened. For its very wide-open serenity, its calm upon a sunny afternoon, broken only by occasional wild men on motors from far countries, you get fond of it, and are quite glad to pursue its length on your goings out and your comings in. The situation of Lauder, in the heart of its famous and secluded vale, is delightful, but that is another thing. In itself it has as a whole a something about it, a flavour of attaching sentiment, which neither Greenlaw nor Earlston, nor Duns nor Haddington, nor Dunbar have any outward suggestion of.

The Soutra Pass leaps the Lammermoors at a narrow neck, where the range begins to assume its inappropriate westerly designation of the Moorfoot Hills. For the shadowy heights that loom to the westward beyond the infant waters of the Esk, the Gala, and the Tyne surpass the actual Lammermoors by a little in stature, and from afar display rather bolder outlines. They belong to Mid-Lothian and continue unbroken into Peeblesshire, and through that county, giving to the Upper Tweed its semi-mountainous character; while Lauderdale, from what may be accounted its head, where several burns, breaking from Lammermoor glens into a wider trough, form the Leader Water to its junction with the Tweed, pursues an almost straight course, a little east and south, and of less than twenty miles. Bordered upon both sides by wild breezy hills of a thousand to twelve hundred feet, the upper half of the dale in which Lauder lies spreads open and level between the woody feet of its high green walls; the

lower half is, for the most part, compressed into a deep trough, through which the Leader frets in rocky channels or chafes the feet of red sandstone cliffs, amid a maze of woods; while for some miles the road edges its way along the breast of the steeps far above, giving occasional but delightful glimpses of flashing waters amid the leafy depths below.

If as regards actual river scenery the lower half of Lauderdale, around Earlston, is more striking, the upper half, otherwise the Lauder neighbourhood, is infinitely better to make sojourn in; not so much because Lauder itself, for its quaintness and character, wins your regard, but that there is more scope for attractive enterprises, in many directions, on foot or by road. Personally, I felt that nearly a month of unbroken fine weather, interrupted by an occasional day on the river, had nothing like exhausted the possibilities of Lauder, either by road or moorland. I put it this way for conventionalities' sake, and merely in regard to those definite objects of visitation which more immediately stimulate one's energies. Personally, this is one of many places I could mention that I should never willingly go away from once I had unpacked my trunks till approaching winter drove me out. The house on the moor of a former chapter is another.

A ridge of upland, only five or six miles through, and frequently touching an elevation of 1200 feet, divides the Leader from the Gala Water. A fine high-road down Lauderdale lands you in fourteen or fifteen miles at Melrose, Abbotsford, or Dryburgh. Prehistoric camps crown many of the high-rounded outlines of the Lammermoors, which in long procession look down on Lauderdale, as well as others far removed from sight. Pele towers and the wreck of castles associated with famous names, and sometimes with

doughty deeds, keep ghostly watch over green ferny glens that wander up by pastoral farms into the wilds. From here, too, you can pierce the very heart of the westerly Lammermoors, if you so choose, without an undue test of average walking powers. Or you can cross them on foot from the head of the dale, stand upon Lammer Law, and look out over East Lothian, and be back again in Lauderdale in less than twenty miles. You can fish for trout, of which there are plenty of most sizes, over nine or ten miles of the Leader, amid always charming scenery, and as many more miles again of tributary burns, if you prefer small deer and enjoy exploration. You can take it easy, too, quite pleasantly in Lauder—can saunter in the woods close at hand, among which the Leader sings melodious airs, or loiter upon the ivied bridge, where Archibald Bell-the-Cat of Tantallon and elsewhere created a notable incident in history and earned his soubriquet, by hanging in cold blood several men of might and fame for whom he had no use. To-day tall trees whisper here, and birds sing from the dense leafy harbourage of the castle woods beside the quiet lane, and the river, with its clear, silvery streams, comes out of it all and purls away over shining gravel into the wide lush meadows beyond. You can sit in a garden if you are lazy at the Arcadian entrance to the little town, or crack over the fence with passing natives in the road. There is lots of time in Lauder—it isn't the least like East Lothian—and plenty of eloquent souls, who have doubtless outlived ambition, and are only too glad to recount the past glories of Lauder, its coaching fame, its flourishing livery business before the railroad came and killed it and depressed the local shopkeepers. But, as related, Lauder stands on one of the international motor routes, though you would not think so to look

at it. This, however, is, I fancy, a cause of more dust and entertainment than profit to the burghers; for these cosmopolitans take it, so to speak, in their stride, and probably only the pilot, who is almost obliged to, can even grasp its name. But after all, save for the first fortnight of August, this does not amount to so very much. I was sitting in mine inn, however, one September day near the luncheon hour, when a big car of the through traffic order pulled up at the door and deposited an amiable-looking, round-about, elderly Californian (as it proved), together with his lady and a son. In the car I noticed as many sheaves of golf clubs, and after the first possible moment the Californian—not the shining hero of the story-books who intimidates buck-jumpers and bad men alike, but a harmless-looking, bow-windowed gentleman, obviously of the commercial variety—thus addressed me: "Say, there are golf links, ain't there?" I was taken aback at such a query from an individual who was equipped at all points for making the world his footstool, and was about to reply in the negative, when I remembered that there was a tousely nine holes somewhere up on the moors, a recent concession to modern custom, towards which I had observed occasional young men and maidens wending light-hearted steps. I soon saw, however, that my heavily-armed friend had only such interest in the matter as might easily be awakened in the breast of an ingenuous enthusiast from over sea making his first acquaintance with British soil, by the mere sight of a finger-post inscribed "To the Golf Links." He came at once to the point, and abruptly demanded the distance to St. Andrews. There seems nothing untoward in the query as here set down, but as delivered in that particular place, it suggested a man of one idea, and of a mind oblivious to the very elements

of British topography, and so it proved. It was as if a motorist stopped you on the highway near Tonbridge Wells, and asked you how far it was to Cambridge, ignoring the little interlude of London. Well, I said, it's so many miles to Edinburgh, and, at a rough estimate, so many more beyond.

"Edinburgh," said the Californian vaguely. "Do we go near Edinburgh? I hadn't reckoned to take that in."

"You go through it," I replied, "and if you have never been there (which was too obvious), it will be a good opportunity to stop over and have a look round."

But Edinburgh apparently conveyed nothing but a name, of bothersome significance, which intervened somehow between the pilgrim and his shrine. Such a pilgrim, too, to such a shrine! A short man, suggestive of prosperous commerce, with gold-rimmed spectacles, a full rosy face, and a still fuller waist, he had evidently no use for Edinburgh, and I had again to give the best estimate I could, which a map would have done better, of the distance from Lauder to St. Andrews. I asked him how he had come. He replied that he did not know, but that he had undoubtedly slept and had breakfasted in Newcastle.

"Did you come by Berwick?"

"Berwick! Berwick! How do you spell it?"

I furnished him with the information, and being now much interested in such a very absent-minded specimen of the well-groomed and well-endowed American genus, I asked him where he crossed the Tweed. His son, who, by the way, was acting chauffeur, now came in, and to him the bewildered parent turned.

"Tom, did we come by Berwick?"

"No, Pa."

"Have we crossed the Tweed?"

" Yes, Pa. We came over it at a place higher up, I don't just remember the name of."

" Coldstream," I suggested.

" Yes, that's it, or some such name."

I couldn't resist improving the occasion a little, and possibly extracting yet another pearl from the older gentleman, and I got it, for when I intimated to him, taking a slight geographical liberty, that he must have come through the Scott country, he replied :

" I don't know whose country it was, Sir, but it seemed a mighty bare one anyway." He was probably thinking of Northumberland.

The real preciosity of this engaging person, however, lay in the unswerving deliberation, regardless of aught else apparently in the three kingdoms, and looking neither to the right nor to the left, with which he was heading for St. Andrews. If he had been the amateur champion of the United States, one might just conceive the condition of mind, though in such case it would never have been revealed with such delightful and unabashed ingenuousness. But the pilgrim, one might confidently make oath from his appearance, would require a stroke a hole from opponents who were nothing like amateur champions. What he wanted, undoubtedly, was to play a round at St. Andrews, so that he could refer to the achievement for the rest of his life at the club at San Francisco or Los Angeles. I suggested that he should have a look at Gullane and North Berwick on the way back, but he had obviously not heard of either, though the word Berwick, with which he had so recently wrestled, provoked a fleeting expression of puzzled inquiry and even fear lest more geography should be required of him. He was a man possessed, for the moment at any rate, of one idea, a curious monomania for a type of individual who was

about as capable of understanding the traditions and significance of that geat golfing Mecca he was bound for as of winning the amateur championship itself. I heard him in the car at the door, as a last word, asking the boots how far it was to St. Andrews, to which unprecedented demand in his experience that functionary replied bluntly, without excuse or apology, "I dinna ken."

The town of Lauder was a royal burgh in the days of William the Lion, and as a corporate owner of property, and in the matter of its civic regulations concerning its

Melrose Abbey.

lands, according to Sir Henry Maine, is the most interesting town in Scotland. Like Berwick and Greenlaw, its freemen participate to the full in these good things, but to the greater extent for a very small town of about 1700 acres. The arable land lies upon the lower slope of the hills to the west of the town, and the common pasture spreads away beyond it. There are fifty Burgesses, and 105 "Burgess acres," but the acre here is a figurative term. Of these portions the Earl of Lauderdale—of whom and whose seat anon—has thirty, the rest being distributed in proportions not calling

for particularisation here. But what is curious are the three divisions into which the civic common land is partitioned. First, there is the larger stretch of high pasture to which the cows are driven daily, and that carries, of course, certain individual rights and limitations. Secondly, there is a tract of arable land, farmed in common by a steward for the benefit of the Burgesses; and lastly, there are the individual plots which each owner looks after himself. There seems quite a hearty sense of *esprit de corps*, and even pride, in being on the hereditary roll of Lauder freemen. The well-to-do widow of a deceased Lauderite, resident in Edinburgh, told me with quite a touch of local patriotism and sentiment that she was a Burgess, and was bringing her son to Lauder to go through the necessary formalities for stepping into his father's vacant lots.

The privilege can be, and, I believe, has been occasionally purchased by an outsider, the value being assessed, I fancy, at from four to five hundred pounds. The manner in which these old Burgess rights, however, take most picturesque effect are in the going out and the coming in of the cows with the town herd. At six every morning in summer this functionary stands in the wide silent street and blows his horn with unrelenting vigour. Many a literally-minded theologian, stopping overnight in Lauder, in the carousing days of old, who had been pushing the bottle too briskly, must have fancied in the fuddle of his waking moments the trump of Gabriel sounding, as did the immortal citizen of Kirkcaldy when he heard the coach horn. It is the return of the cows in the evening, however, that most engages the interest of the stranger, as they come back trooping down with full udders to the warning notes of the horn that the milk pails should be in readiness. It is curious then to see each one of them seeking out

with knowledge and confidence its own abode in the town.

Two families dominated Lauder throughout the Middle Ages, one on the west, and the other on the east of the river. They were never on good terms, and then gradually in the early Stuart period the one supplanted the other, and, speaking figuratively of course, reigns supreme to-day. Both of these families we encountered, it will be remembered, in East Lothian, with a hint to the effect that we should meet them again here, to wit, the Maitlands, Earls of Lauderdale, and the Lauders, whom they gradually pushed out of their native dale, to take fresh root elsewhere. There are old towers and other fragments around Lauder, relics of both families, and their respective chronicles begin to take hold of one, as is so often the case in wandering among scenes that are eloquent of particular names, and closely identified with their fortunes. They were, in truth, at very close quarters, and the town of Lauder must often have cried in despair that it could not serve two masters. An old Lauder tower stood somewhere, though of uncertain site, in the town itself; but three miles up a glen where the Lauder folk in their leisure hours, or in their courting days, follow for a space the windings of a moorland burn, though beyond their reach, stand the remains of a chief fortress of the Lauders. There is not much left of it, a deep moat choked with brush, and some fragments of ruined wall upon a green mound overshadowed by ancient trees—a solitary place, secluded, unvisited, hardly known. Three miles downwards from Lauder, by the left bank of the river, and almost concealed by foliage on a high green ledge, is a pele tower, still about thirty feet high, and surmountable by a broken stairway from a vaulted basement. This is another stronghold of the vanished

Lauders, who, it will be remembered, were also "Lauders of the Bass." The end of them here, or virtually so, was tragic. For in 1590 William Lauder of Lauder, or Will-of-the-West, had been at such odds, not only with his powerful neighbours the Maitlands, but with the Pringles or Hopringles (of Gordon, I presume), the Cranstouns of Corsbie, a fine well-preserved tower in the middle of a drained marsh near Ledgerwood, and well worth visiting, and with the ubiquitous Homes, that he came to a violent end at their hands. He was sitting in the old Tolbooth at Lauder, apparently administering justice, when a company of these unfriendly neighbours burst in upon him with such murderous intent that he shot and killed one of them, whereupon he was himself hacked to pieces, and as no Border row was quite complete without a fire, the building was committed to the flames by the Homes. His son, however, succeeded, but only to perpetual quarrels, and finally a duel with James Maitland, whom he crippled for life. Financial troubles, as well as many enemies, seem to have dogged the steps of the last of the Lauders. The duel and money matters gave a Home, who happened to be sheriff of Berwickshire, the opportunity no doubt he relished to outlaw the last laird of Lauder. He only came back in his old age to bury his son in the churchyard, and to erect over his grave a tombstone that, though removed to the present churchyard, still remains with an inscription no longer legible, but which was copied by Sir Andrew Dick Lauder of Fountainhall, near Edinburgh, a hundred years ago:

"Hic Jacet
Robertus Lauderius filius
Unicus Robert Lauderii
Antiquæ Domus Domini
Bene spei alolesceus
Obiit anno Domini 1649."

Thus ended the Lauders of Lauder, and the headship of the clan passed to the Lauders of Fountainhall.

But the Maitlands, who had gradually ousted them, were not by any means intruders or anything approaching it. Indeed, they seem to have been here on the other side of the river as long as the Lauders, for the ancestors of both come first into notice, and were both at Lauder in the wars of Edward I. In the old Thirlestaine Castle, whose ruins still stand in a grove high perched above the Brunton Burn, an old ballad celebrated how gallantly a veteran Maitland here defied Edward I., or possibly his grandson:—

"As they passed up the Lammermoor,
They turned both up and down,
Until they came to a darksome tower
Some ca' it Leader town.

'Wha hauds this house?' young Edward cried,
'Or wha gi'es it o'er to me?'
A grey-haired knight set up his head
And crackit right crouselie.

'Of Scotland's King I haud my house,
He pays me meat and fee,
An' I will keep my good auld house
While my house will keep me.'

Full fifteen days that braid host lay
Sieging auld Maitland keen.
Syne they ha'e left him hail and fair
Within his strength of Stane."

The Maitlands removed from their "darksome tower" of old Thirlestaine in the time of the Chancellor Maitland, Lord of that ilk, while James VI. and I. was on the throne, and erected the first portion of the huge old sombre mansion between Lauder and the river, transferring to it the name of the old rude keep above the Brunton Burn. They divided their time between

this castle and Lethington, across the Lammermoors in East Lothian, so intimately and indelibly associated with the most brilliant bearer of that name, Queen Mary's chancellor. The baneful, but glittering memories of the powerful Duke of Lauderdale linger here, as upon the East Lothian house, and an old oak in the grounds bears his name, and drops a limb when things are going to happen. But later on this was the chief

Old Thirlestaine Castle.

residence of the Earls of Lauderdale, and the "yirl," till recent times, was the personification of might and majesty and power to generations of youthful Lauderites. Something of a break came in recent years, when the direct line ran out, and a lawsuit between collateral Maitlands had to drag its length before the succession was settled. This was followed by another suit on the part of the successful claimant with a rival house for the office of hereditary standard-bearer of Scotland. But law, whether in Scotland or

England, is a costly enterprise, and its shadow broods over Thirlestaine Castle, its lawns and woods and park lands, and its frequently untenanted halls. But it is an inspiring old pile in the Scottish taste of that period, blended with the Jacobean and southern flavour, which naturally influenced the taste of men familiar with the court of St. James's.

Lauderdale is emphatically a pastoral country. Dairy cows and young cattle tramp the broad green meadows of the valley, or in hot noons stand knee-deep in Leader's pellucid streams, which curve and fret between ruddy banks from one side of it to the other, while great sheep farms wave indefinitely into the hills behind. There are fields of grain and roots, too, but they are comparatively intruders, and there is nothing in the landscape here to worry the æsthetic sense with over-precision, or too complete a triumph over nature. A Wiltshire sheep farmer might traverse the whole dale without any sense of abasement whatsoever. Neither the oats, the barley, nor the roots would make him feel in the least uncomfortable, nor would the sound of the rents paralyse him, as they certainly would in East Lothian. This is an easy-going, wide-open, low-rented country, though flock-masters of renown in the north are perched in snug tributary valleys or upon windy braes on the Lammermoor side of the dale. There is ample space, too, for wild flowers to bloom in the hedgerows, and by the burn sides in Lauderdale, and there are woods and copses and tangled thickets, where in September the willow herb and the meadowsweet, the tansy and the ragwort, the loosestrife and the modest but ubiquitous little harebell still bloomed amain. There are "dowie denes" and "broomy knowes" galore, even in the lowlands of Lauderdale. The old pastoral ballads that somehow in the low

country of the Merse and Lothian seem to paint the landscape of another age, are all in order here. But then Lauder itself is something of a survival. It is written of a local lass, that when she went to Edinburgh for the first time, and saw the Firth flecked with small white waves, she exclaimed, "Lord save us, yon's a bonnie flock o' sheep."

There is a bridle track, already alluded to, which trails right over the Lammermoors from Carfrae Mill, at the head of Lauderdale, to Gifford, a matter of ten miles or thereabouts. A level open road runs to the dale head, skirting the haughs of Leader upon one side, and the long up-sloping fields, now mildly engaged upon their late harvest upon the other, and before it faces the fearsome climb of the Soutra Pass. Compassing these five flat miles one day upon a cycle, and with some relief that the two-mile push up the Soutra was not in my day's programme, I left the invaluable assistant to many a long hill walk at the snug hostelry at Carfrae Mill, and borrowing a stout ashen staff from the landlord, took the farm lane that follows the windings of the Killhope Burn into the hills. By narrow rushy meadows, and mossy heathery bottoms, and little groves of alder and native oak and mountain ash, and over rustic bridges of precarious support, the way was easy, and both the air and the heart felt light. For it was a radiant morning, with a brilliant sun illuminating yet more but far steeper harvest fields upon one side of the glen, while the opposing hills were still wrapped in shadow, and the burn, the best of the company, sparkled beside me. I reached in due course the foot of the long ascent, and a climb of a few hundred feet brought me to the brim of the long rolling plateau of heather, where the virgin heart of Lammermoor waves away towards East Lothian.

Up here, on the very brink of the wild, stands the little old homestead of Tollis Hill, the *ultima Thule* of civilisation on this side the moors, and now but an outlying shepherd's cottage on a great sheep farm. But on the patch of greensward that opened to the moor the goodwife was removing the weekly wash from the lines, with the satisfaction, no doubt, evoked by such an operation in a week of radiant days and drying winds, a thousand feet above sea level. In these altitudes, however, there is another side to the picture, and we talked of the snowstorms of the preceding winter. There was a walled garden outside the house, and the whole thing, walls and all, she told me, had upon a recent occasion been entirely buried; while, pointing to the drying-poles, from whose lines some of the family garments were still swaying high in air, she remarked that you could just see "a teenie bit o' the tops above the snow." And the sheep! As one looked at the wild dark ravines cleaving the moor on all sides, and pictured one of these mid-winter blizzards, a sheet of heaping-up snow, and many score of sheep anywhere beneath it, I thought again of those laconic entries in the weather report of my morning paper: "Heavy snowstorms reported from Berwickshire, causing much anxiety among Lammermoor flock-masters. Hundreds of sheep are said to be buried," and so forth. "Aye, it's a sair time for the herds then." But they can tell their own stories, and they are men of sense, of restraint and admirable conversation these Lammermoor shepherds—none better upon the earth. For herself, she said it was awfu' lonesome sometimes in winter, but she got used to it.

There was once an elderly couple—that is to say, a bachelor shepherd and a spinster to do for him—sent up from a farm on the Whiteadder to spend a lengthy

season in a shieling somewhere in the wilds by the Fasney water. They were neither of the marrying sort, but there had always been a vague tradition, or perhaps something more, that the two solitaries would some day make it up together. The lady was understood to have been not averse to the scheme for the past twenty years or so, but the gentleman remained obdurately silent. Whether it was to give them a chance of coming to an understanding, or whether it was merely in the way of business that my informant despatched them to spend six months together in the wilderness does not matter. But on their return to the farm the inevitable query was put to the lady by her mistress.

"Well, have you and Jamie made it up together?" A mere negative, not conveyed, so far as I am aware, with the coyness meet for the occasion, was not sufficient for the curiosity of the mistress. "What in the world did you two talk about all the evenings, then, sitting on each side of the fire?"

"We didna talk."

"Didn't Jamie say anything?"

"Na. He jes' sat an' glowered an' glowered at me."

"Didn't he propose?"

"Na, he didna propose; he jes' sat glowerin' and glowerin'."

Thus ended the love story, after the fashion of some American novels, when the young woman, after three hundred pages of introspection apparently favourable to the suitor, proceeds with her mamma to a further round of Continental hotels, while the gentleman, equally ripe for domestic happiness, and on the point of proposing, departs on business for San Francisco; both of them to live happily, and single, so far as we

know, ever after. But Tollis Hill is noted as the scene of the well-known story of "Midside Maggie" and the Duke of Lauderdale, related at length in Wilson's *Tales of the Borders.* It is very long, and will not well bear compression—not, one is constrained to add, from the thrilling nature of its incidents.

There was nothing now upon the pack-horse path till it dropped down into East Lothian, but heathy moorland to the right and to the left, and as far as the eye could see. Peewits cried, long-lingering curlews called, and grouse, with an instinct perhaps of what was coming, gave uneasy utterance to their suspicions, or sprang wide of the path with a September caution that served them so well in former days, and scudded over the tawny and purple waste with a strength of flight that would be little help to them in these guileful days. I had walked for perhaps an hour along the narrow hard strip of greensward that had clothed this hundred years no doubt the old worn tracks of the horses' feet. I had followed it curving around the head of glens above the spongy cradles of incipient burns, or dipped with it into some trough between the hills, where others in brown infancy were already gurgling among rushes, mosses, and wild cotton-flowers, when all at once round the sharp curve of a hill fifty yards ahead a human form appeared. And then, instead of the solitary shepherd which naturally jumped to the mind, it proved to be but the first of a shooting party extended in more or less single file, and straggling out, I daresay, over fifty yards, though the party, guns, beaters, &c., numbered perhaps half that amount of persons all told.

The prophetic souls of the old stagers among the grouse had not dreamed dreams in vain. By the time I had reached the top of Lammer Law, and was eating

Abbotsford.

my sandwiches, with my back against the cairn, and my vision wandering once again over the old familiar outlook, with the woods of Yester, and the beechen glens of Hopes at my feet, and half Scotland from St. Abb's to the Grampians spread out beyond, sharp-cut in the translucent balmy air, I heard the distant fusilade opening from the further butts. This procession, it needs no saying, would have staggered a shepherd on the Lammermoors, when I used to know them—the day of small stocks and long heather and setters, and much hard work, and small companies. A terribly trite subject of contrast this, I am painfully aware. But to any one who is old enough to have broken ramrods over unruly spaniels' backs, which impatient youth I fear often did, or to have wrestled with swollen pinfire cartridges on a wet day, the transformation does seem marvellous. The prodigious gregariousness of modern shooting, and the paraphernalia required to bring the grouse and partridge to the guns, and the number of guns required to account for it when it gets there; all these things must have altered the very temperament of the average sportsman. There was assuredly a sense of comradeship associated with the gun, and a sentiment associated with tramping the fields and moors, besides many other more practical accessories which need no telling, and that, save in odd corners now regarded as belated, have gone by the board. There must nowadays be quite a large number of shooting men whose entire experience of field or moor, from their first season's shooting, is limited to standing in butts or behind hedges, and firing at game brought to the gun from haunts they hardly see, and by men and methods entirely outside their purview, while the physical effort is reduced to a minimum. The greater demands on mere marksmanship seem hardly concerned

with this point of view at all, and suggest a highly skilful game with all the limitations of a game, rather than a field sport. All this is of no earthly consequence. But one cannot help sometimes wondering what a considerable number of the rank and file of this school would do if they were dropped into a strange country, dependent wholly upon themselves for finding sport, and for every detail connected with it, in the absence of all opportunity for cultivating those instincts of the chase and an eye for things which the youngster of a past generation could hardly help more or less acquiring if he had the taste.

The stock of grouse, however, with heather burning and driving, has increased enormously, I believe, on the Lammermoors, and, curious to relate, the white hares have travelled down there within recent times from the Highlands, to the no little disturbance of the native breed, and with scant welcome, no doubt, from the shooting owners.

Another long day was expended with profit and pleasure in an effort to penetrate the heart of the hills in an easterly direction with various definite intentions and a vague ultimate design on Twinlaw Cairn; not because this is of more physical distinction than its fellows, but for the famous tragedy that by repute was there enacted. My companion upon this, as upon some other occasions, was the accomplished occupant of the manse of Lauder, whose taste for natural history, antiquity, and local lore of all kinds, through the medium of a felicitous method of expressing it, is familiar enough to Edinburgh readers. We drove out on this occasion to one of the large farms which look down over civilisation and Lauderdale and open their back gates upon the wild. In this case it was on to the grass-grown remains of one of the many prehistoric camps that crown this line of hills. My

companion was anxious to trace out one of the "herring roads," by which in ancient days when Scotsmen fared hardly, the salt herrings used to be brought on pack horses across the hills into the interior.

The day was bright at starting, but dark clouds, borne on a brisk north-west wind, crossed the sun betimes, and sent black shadows scudding over the tawny moors, from which the last glow of purple had now faded. We flushed a small pack of black game, an old cock in all his pride of tail and plumage giving the alarm, followed by some young grey-hens, and a juvenile male or two. It was just the place for them; a rough grass enclosure at the edge of the heather—what Northumbrian sportsmen call the "white grass country." We found the track of the old road, whatever it was, British or herring, far into the heart of the hill. This unmistakably Saxon land, its laws and riggs, lay all about, Hogs Law, Riddel Law, Hart Law, Hunt Law, Wedder Law, and but little above us, with their rounded knobs, fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen hundred feet above the sea. After a protracted quest we found the scant remains of some small huts, concerning which the hill shepherds had stirred the interest of their own spiritual shepherd no little. We had scarcely discovered them, however, three or four on the banks of a "wee black burnie," when we saw, not undismayed, the tawny ridges that guard the infant streams of the Dye water, turning almost white for the black curtain that unregarded had reared itself behind them. We had scant time to draw conclusions from our find; whether, that is to say, the rude foundations of the little huts were British, or merely some ancient shielings beyond the reach of oral tradition. Twinlaw Cairn soon faded out of the day's programme, and within the next ten minutes we were grateful for the protection of a row

of butts that we had heartily abused beneath the sunshine, as, like the rest of them, an ugly blot upon the virgin solitude of the waste.

But the skies in good time lifted, and only moderately dry—for a butt in a driving storm is not as useful as a cow-shed or even a sheep-stell—taking a wide circuit homewards, and with it our chances of further storm, we arrived in time at what is perhaps the prehistoric gem, as regards mysterious origin, of all this country. For here, in a low flat valley, are great circles of stones some sixty yards in diameter, and originally eight or ten paces apart. Great numbers, however, are *in situ*, and the scheme suggests on a smaller scale the great temple of Avebury in Wiltshire. But this is entirely in the wilds ; no village, as there, has made a quarry of the sacred stones, though a stone dyke adjoining may account for such ravage as has taken place. We didn't quarrel with it on this account, however, as it sheltered us from another tempest. With the expiring efforts of the sun we crossed the moor homeward. The wind was keen, and the grasses shivered, and the rain-drops blew from the wet heather. The tawny landscape was sad and autumnal, for October was at hand. A grouse clucked occasionally, and a golden plover piped by on the wings of the wind. But the summer birds had all left the moors, the curlews mostly to their seashore haunts, the wheatear, and the stonechat, and the shy rock-ousel (*Scottice* mountain blackbird) had fled our shores for Heaven knows where. It was getting dusk as we reached the friendly farmhouse and its welcome hospitalities, and nearly dark as we got into the trap and pitched down apace behind a sure-footed horse the steep lanes that brought us once more into the vale.

Among the many camps which crown the long

procession of heights overlooking the dale are those of Addinstone and Dodd's Head. They confront one another across the deep-cut lateral valley of the Soonhope Burn, where the old homestead of Longcroft within its grove of trees lies beautifully placed with its back to the steep up-springing hills, and its face to meadowy flats that expand into Lauderdale. Addinstone is an important and clearly defined post, the interior, which is rectangular, measuring 300 feet by about half that distance in breadth. In the centre of this interior space is a curious raised earthen platform some 90 feet long. The camp is defended by two lines of ditches and ramparts which are still of considerable size. The opposite fort of Dodd's Head is even more finely placed, as it crowns the summit of a lofty cone-shaped hill, which rises sharply above Longcroft, and the angle where the Soonhope and the Whalplaw burns meet, looking, therefore, straight down the level narrow vale of the united streams. This camp is circular, its ditches and ramparts being also still well defined and clearly marked from most points below against the skyline. A Roman road passes a little west of Lauder, and many Roman coins and relics have been found in the neighbourhood. The occupant of Longcroft, the hill pastures of which extend over to East Lothian, is himself an antiquary, and showed me a large number of quern's millstones and pieces of pottery that his observation or his men's ploughs have brought to light. The most curious find of all was a large copper bowl discovered in a steep pasture above the house. It seems that a fragment of it, discoloured of course, had been lying for some time unknown above the surface, and that the sheep for some reason had taken a fancy to rubbing themselves against it, till it took on a bright polish, and one day with the sun on it caught their owner's eye. It is almost

more singular that since encountering the bowl and its history at Longcroft, I should have come across a practically similar case in the mountains of Merionethshire, where the Romans have left so many traces. There, too, a farmer well known to me has a brass bowl that was not long since disclosed on a hillside in the same manner, by the rubbing of his sheep, and the

Longcroft, in Lauderdale.

glitter therefrom. To catalogue the hill camps within an easy walk of Lauder would be simple, but irrelevant here. It will be enough to say that there is, at least, one worth visiting for every day in the week. Here, as elsewhere, the visitor may amuse himself with futile conjectures as to the races who raised, adapted, or re-adapted them. Picts and Gaels, Cymri and Saxons, Danes and Romans, no doubt attacked and defended most of them in turn. The Roman occupation between

the famous wall of Hadrian and Severus, and the turf wall of Antoninus was probably spasmodic, and not often of any long duration. The *ultima Thule* of Imperial Rome was on the Tyne and Solway, not on the Forth and Clyde.

CHAPTER XV

LOWER LAUDERDALE

Riding the Marches of the burgess estates was in days not very remote a tremendous function in Lauder. It was celebrated on the King's birthday, and the notables of the burgh, having assembled on horseback before the town-hall, drank his Majesty's health before proceeding to business. The circuit having been completed to a point about three-quarters of a mile from the town, it was the custom of the mounted portion of the company to race from there to the town-hall, and the last quarter down the straight broad street must have been an exhilarating spectacle. After this there were lashings of meat and drink, and they toasted the King and one another, after the old hearty fashion, for the rest of the day and a considerable part of the night. In those days, too, a man used to parade the town in the early hours of the morning, thumping a big drum to get the people out of bed. The morning horn that is still blown down the main street to summon the cows may prematurely disturb the night-dreams of degenerate visitors from Edinburgh and the like, but nothing less than a big drum under the window would presumably have penetrated the slumbers of the local stalwarts of olden days.

The old kirk of Lauder stood in what are, now at least, the policies of the castle, and the Scottish Parliament has more than once sat in it. The present one is comparatively modern. The natives of these counties,

like most east coast Saxons, have no great gift of song, though hearty enough in the matter of Sunday hymns. What is sometimes frivolously designated a cock-and-hen choir, seems the rule in such country churches as I happen to know. That they are still a church-going people hereabouts, there is little doubt, Lauder kirk, like others of the kind, being full of men on Sunday mornings. What has vanished, though within my time, or almost vanished, and mercifully too, is the long-coated, top-hatted funereal broad-cloth uniformity, which was once so rigid, even among the labourers, perhaps particularly among them. Nowadays there seems as much variety and liberty in dress among the men of a country congregation as south of the Border.

The one moment of the week when Lauder street presents a really animated appearance is when the stream pouring down from the Established Church meets the up-flowing tide from the United Free Kirk after Sunday morning service. The two churches—there are now only two, unless the Wee Frees, to whom the House of Lords gave all the cash, are counted—seem to get along well together, though why the dissenting church continues to set up for itself, since patronage, the old bone of contention, has long been abolished, no one may judge from ordinary ethics. The reasons are clouded in subtleties and dogmas that a southerner might perhaps get a glimmering of if he boarded in the family of a U.F. Kirk elder for a year, and applied himself at the same time to the controversial literature of the last eighty years. Maybe, too, there is something in it of the invincible Scottish conservatism, such as tends to keep the masses Radical from sheer tradition, and would probably keep them so, as Scotsmen of the other persuasion declare, if the two political parties exchanged programmes! The dissent-

ing church has ample funds, so why upset things even when there is no longer anything left to dissent from in the Church of Scotland. Tradition, *esprit de corps*, and lingering jealousies, no doubt, have something to do with what to the alien seems an anomaly. Perhaps the tradition of rigid Calvinism, if not always practised, is, in theory at any rate, dear to the heart of the Scottish dissenter, and he fears the broader standpoint of the Established Church.

But the rigid sabbatarianism has enormously softened. Golf and other games are usually barred, but that is nothing. Cycling, country walks, secular reading are as usual in the south as in rural England, or, at least, are regarded with apparent toleration. The herding together at street corners of the young men on Sunday, is far more of an institution than in any part of England, except the extreme north. There is nothing theological whatever in these gatherings, but very much the reverse. Even if not actually ill-mannered, to sensitive comers and goers of the weaker sex, as inevitable subjects of collective comment not always leaning to respectful admiration, these otherwise harmless corner-boys seem rather a blemish to the sabbatarian calm of a Scottish village. No one, possibly, but some U.F. elder would deny for a moment that they would be much better employed playing football. One is almost inclined to long for one hour of the old-fashioned elder, who cleared the streets with a whip, except that he would not be over-nice in his discrimination, and the harmless pedestrian would suffer with the brazen corner loafer. Times indeed have changed. "D'ye no ken ye're whustlin' ?" even from a servant, whose years entitled him or her to make free in so solemn a cause, was no time-honoured joke forty years ago, even in the Lothians, but a readily provoked rebuke on the Sabbath

day to light-hearted youth, though it may be feared he took it as a joke. Scottish Calvinism, in the person of the preacher at any rate, every one knows had its lighter side, whereas modern Welsh Calvinism has no gleam of such humanities about it. It is impossible to conceive a humorous story emanating from a Welsh chapel, though many good stories come out of Wales. It was an Aberdonian in Lauder who introduced me to the shade of his celebrated townsman Dr. Kidd, who was in his day, I believe, a perfect autocrat in the pulpit. A stranger in a red waistcoat, on one memorable occasion, had taken his seat in a front pew, and in a manner made himself unconsciously a mark for the doctor's eye. Unfortunately he fell asleep at the "fifthly" or "sixthly," and the preacher, pausing in his sermon, pointed at him and shouted: "Wake up that man!" The usual measures being applied with success, the sermon was proceeded with. In two or three minutes, however, the unrepentant recusant was nodding again. "Wake up that red-breasted sinner in the front pew!" shouted the doctor. During the pause that ensued the usual remedies were again successfully applied by his neighbours, and the backslider was once more brought up to the scratch. Unintimidated, however, and unabashed, he was seen in a short time to be once more in a state of unconsciousness by the hawk-eyed cleric, who this time entirely lost patience. Snatching up a small Bible which lay handy on the pulpit desk, he hurled it with unerring aim, and hit the delinquent squarely on the side of the head. "There, sir," he cried, "if you won't *hear* the Word of God, at least you shall *feel* it."

For the rest of the discourse there was no more trouble, and the doctor finished his message of peace and goodwill to his flock without further disturbance.

The ash is a prominent tree throughout Berwickshire. It flourishes exceedingly, and grows in places to a great size. It was probably grown about farmhouses long before forestry became a cult of the Lowland lairds, being useful for farm implements in the primitive days, and also planted on boundaries. It is an old saw, too, *à propos* of its quick growth, that the ash will buy the horse before the oak will buy the saddle. The mountain ash has everywhere magic virtues. It is sometimes alluded to as indicating a dark age in Lauderdale, because herds of cattle a century ago were to be occasionally seen with a branch of the rowan tree tied to their left horns as a specific against some current disorder. Rank superstition is not so dead as people seem to think. Calvinism did not, I fancy, greatly influence it one way or the other in Scotland. It has almost killed it in the last fifty years in Wales, though no British people, I suppose, could be more unlike in temperament than those of the Teutonic districts of Scotland, and the Celtic Welsh. But in an English parish on the Welsh Border to-day, not at all out of the way, and almost wholly Anglican in creed, if that matters anything, the mountain ash is not merely regarded, but utilised for its magical influence in a manner even more remarkable than its application to the horns of the Lauderdale cattle 100 years ago. A rite connected with it is firmly believed in as a specific against whooping-cough, when the complaint is in the village. A particular rowan tree, standing in a wood a mile away, is resorted to, a small incision is made with a knife in the trunk, and a hair of the sufferer is inserted in the slit. The trunk of one is entirely scarred with these old marks, and an adjoining tree has been commenced upon within the last three years. At this moment there are two or three fresh incisions, with lately plucked hairs adhering to them,

and I have seen them and touched them within the last few weeks. Furthermore, natives of the parish living in distant parts seem to retain their primitive faith, and, when this juvenile ailment is in the household, send hairs home to their friends to insert in this magic tree in the heart of a wild wood. In a too curious inspection the other day, I accidentally snapped a fresh one, and have felt vaguely uncomfortable that a whole family may be still whooping on that account.

Some archaic accessories to wedding celebrations are even yet kept up in Lauderdale. "Running the brae" is one of these. This is performed by the attendant youths, who race across a field, the goal and prize being a silk handkerchief, held at the corners by the bride and bridegroom. The winner also kisses the bride, and wears the handkerchief as a trophy at the ensuing dance. Cradling, which was mentioned as being long extinct in the Merse, is, I am credibly informed, still occasionally practised in Lauderdale. Railroads are commonly credited with the destruction of these old-world customs. The railway to Lauder may have killed its posting business, but as a disturber of rural peace and simplicity, this one may surely be regarded with equanimity!

Penetrating the sentinel heights that guard the vale, of which Boon Hill, though it carries no camp, is the most conspicuous, an interesting, rather solitary country spreads away eastward along the foot of the Lammermoors, towards the Merse. The moors here present no bold wall, such as does their northern side to the dwellers in Lothian plains, to golfers upon distant shores and to ships upon the sea, but spread gradually downward in wide breadths of reclaimed or half-reclaimed land, merging by degrees with the normal landscape of the lower level. At the edge of these

moorish, half-tamed, and thinly planted sweeps, which trend upward to the heather, lies the ancient seat of the distinguished house of Spottiswood of that ilk. Not ancient in a literal sense, for the building is comparatively modern, and is, I believe, only occasionally occupied by shooting tenants. It stands amid fine old timber upon a long southerly slope, with far-stretching belts of well-grown plantings enclosing its home pastures. There is about it that measure of fascination, which a certain aloofness from the world, and a rather lonely surrounding country, seems to impart by very contrast to a snug and luxuriant abiding-place in its midst.

The Spottiswoods of Spottiswood are a very ancient stock, and have contributed men of mark to Scottish history since time in such things began. An Archbishop Spottiswood of Glasgow crowned Charles I. at Holyrood. His son was Secretary of State, but in 1643 was captured at Philiphaugh, tried by the Parliament, and executed. Another son of the house was Governor of Virginia early in the eighteenth century. He was very popular, and excellent company, and tales are there told about him to this day. A great many title-deeds in that ancient commonwealth start with his signature, being originally Crown grants, as he had a fancy for exploring in a comfortable sort of way with plenty of congenial friends, spare horses, servants, and good meat and drink, and granted a good deal of what was then wild land to all he had a fancy for. I had his signature and seal myself in a tin box on this account for several years, though in a century and a half it had grown very wan and yellow. The well-known London printing house of Spottiswoode is a comparatively recent offshoot of this interesting cradle on the slopes of the Lammermoors.

But far the most vivid personality connected with

its more recent ownership is Lady John Scott, the heiress of the house, who married a son of the Duke of Buccleuch, and came back here to spend a long widowhood, and to die only about fifteen years ago. She was a notable personage, and well known to all ranks throughout the country. She had a keen taste for literature, for antiquities, and folklore, a passion for her ancestral home, and all that pertained to it. She wrote a good deal of poetry—some of it in the vernacular, or, to be more precise, in the old Scottish tongue. There is not a Scot in the world, I suppose, or an Anglo-Saxon of any kind, of middle age or over, who does not know "Annie Laurie." Lady John Scott wrote it, or rather edited an impassioned out-pouring of a Kirkcudbrightshire laird, by name Douglas, on the Miss Laurie of Maxwelltown, who was breaking hearts—his, at any rate, we must suppose—about the year 1700. It required some editing! I have seen the original version, and can remember one verse. It ran, I think, thus :—

"She's backit like a peacock,
She's breasted like a swan,
Her face it is the fairest
That e'er the sun shone on,
That e'er the sun shone on.
She's jimp aboot the middle
And she has a rollin' e'e ;
An' for bonnie Annie Laurie,
I'd lay me down and dee."

The gifted lady of Spottiswood had a fine enthusiasm and feeling for her native soil, and what is more, lived upon it. She had just a little weakness for erecting curious stone archways and other little monuments here and there, which may cause brief shocks to the scarce wanderer taken unawares in his pilgrimage along the leafy ways of Spottiswood. In the Lodge,

by the same hand, is embedded a stone bearing a Latin inscription not worth recording here, which was brought from Archbishop Spottiswood's house in Glasgow. The place generally looked rather forlorn, and the outskirts of the policies not a little unkempt, as if the glory had departed. But it was a chill drear autumn day when I was there. The leaves shivered above in the high beech trees, and moaned in the pine woods. The Twinlaw Cairn, which I had hitherto failed to reach, showed close at hand on the edge of the Lammermoors, the two cairns standing boldly out against the sky on the summit of a broad hill, and their story is dramatic to a degree.

A body of English, how composed and by whom led is not revealed, invading this country on a certain occasion, was met by a Scottish army just here on this southern slope of the Lammermoors. When the two sides were arrayed for battle, the course which James IV. in later days at Flodden is said to have proposed to Surrey, though in that case in the person of their two illustrious selves, struck one of the two leaders as a happy notion. It was a pity, he urged, that so many brave men should be sacrificed, while the issue could just as well be decided by a champion selected from either side, and provide entertainment at the same time for both armies. This was agreed to, and champions having been chosen they rode out between the armies, and a fierce encounter ended in the victory of the Scottish warrior.

"Like lions in a furious fight,
Their steelèd falchions gleam,
Till from our Scottish warrior's side
Fast flowed the crimson stream.
With deafening din on coats of mail,
The deadly blows resound,
Till the brave English warrior
Did breathless press the ground."

Thus a seventeenth-century ballad celebrates in long shadowy retrospect the clash of arms. But it was then came the real part of the tragedy. For when the father of the victorious champion, Edgar of Wedderlee, which adjoins Spottiswood, gazed upon the expiring Englishman, as was supposed, a cry of agony burst from his lips. For he recognised by some unmistakable mark a son of his own that had been carried off in childhood by English Borderers, and reared as one of themselves, and that he had in consequence been slain by his own brother. So the two armies in sorrowful sympathy for the grief-stricken parent and brother on the one side, and the gallant dead upon the other, set to work to build two cairns, passing the stones from hand to hand from the burn beneath to the high ridges where they now stand, conspicuous to the eye over half Berwickshire. The farm of Flass lies at the foot of the sloping moors, just beneath them ; and as we were lately on the subject of superstitions, it may be noted as having been in 1736 the scene of a sacrificial offering of a horse, which was burnt alive during some malignant disease among the stock of the neighbourhood.

Walking down from the groves of Spottiswood over some rough pastures and some apparently unreclaimable mosses to the hamlet of Westruther, Wedderlee, in full sight of Twinlaw Cairns, stands as it should, rather sadly in a patch of woodland upon the long foothill sweep, fulfilling now, I think, but a modest function. The Lammermoors roll away behind it, and the two Dirrington laws, near Longformacus, rise cone-shaped against the horizon. The Edgars had to sell it in 1737, and the departure of the only son and heir from the halls of his ancestors was delayed till nightfall—to throw an appropriate gloom over the occasion, says a

biographer; while the country folk handed down the fact in its double significance: "It was a dark nicht when the last Edgar rode out o' Wedderlee." There even exist writers who have seen in him the original of Edgar Ravenswood. Westruther is an isolated hamlet, and possesses an ancient but abandoned little kirk of barn-like device, with broad stone stairway and platform outside each gable-end leading into the galleries like the steps up to a granary or loft. There is also an old stone mounting block, and more graves in the wide green churchyard—Edgars of Spottiswood, no doubt, among them—than you would fancy this sparsely peopled country could have filled in a thousand years.

For three miles below Lauder the river curves between its red banks through wide meadows, and shorthorn cattle cool their legs in its stony shallows. By the roadside here and there, beneath the shadows of umbrageous oaks and soaring ash trees, stand real old-fashioned homesteads in which, or upon their sites at one time or another, lived various members of the Lauder clan. One of these, St. Leonard's, has a Latin inscription let into the wall of what is held to be a fifteenth-century chapel, and of which I could only make out that the first four words were "Deus est fons vitœ." The highway crosses the Leader to its eastern bank by a stone bridge, which may be aptly regarded as dividing Upper from Lower Lauderdale. Berwickshire, too, here crosses the river, which henceforward, running down to Earlston and the Tweed, parts that county for much of its beautiful course from Roxburghshire, with its disconcerting habit of thrusting fragments into the vitals of its neighbours. There are no more meadows and farms in the valley now. The hills press in, and, for the most draped in tangled woods, rise to an imposing

On the Leader.

height above the Leader, and leave it but a narrow trough in which to fret its downward way. It is a beautiful gorge, whether standing in the clear stream below or looking down from the high road far above through vistas of foliage on to its flashing waters.

The angler for a purely nominal consideration can fish practically the whole of Upper Lauderdale, and down this lower wooded glen to the beautiful seat of Carolside which lies embowered in its depths. The Leader is a natural trout stream of the finest qualities, and in emulating the achievements of the widow's cruse, and keeping up its stock against unbridled onslaughts, it is even more wonderful than the Whiteadder. For it is neither so long, nor fed by so many tributaries, nor so inaccessible as the upper portion of its easterly neighbour. It is a silvery rather than an amber stream as the other, a distinction which the fisherman, at least, will recognise. Fishing, as will be imagined, is a popular pursuit in Lauderdale, and the native angler has to put up betimes with the company of strangers from all the south-eastern towns, as well as from Edinburgh and even the Lanarkshire collieries. Fishing clubs, native and alien, hold competitions here, and yet there are plenty of trout. Heaven knows why, and yet I can swear to it from ocular demonstration! though an east wind, a bright sky, and low water were not conducive to heavy baskets. But such testimony is neither here nor there. In the club competitions the baskets are weighed with jealous care, and the results are printed in the *Scotsman* and other papers. There is no room for embroidery on these occasions at any rate. Here, as in the Whiteadder, ten-, twelve-, and fourteen-pound baskets—which may mean anything from twenty-five to fifty fish—are quite often scored by the prize winner, to say nothing of the much greater

number of unrecorded private achievements on other occasions. And with all this, as good a judge as there could well be told me the river was actually improving, and that he had killed this year more large fish between one and two pounds than he had ever done before. I leave this problem, like that of the Whiteadder, for he to solve who may. It is no use discussing the mystery with Scotsmen of these districts, who think it is natural and have never been used to anything else. They take it for granted that no amount of rod-fishing, fly or worm, makes any difference to a river, and that the supply of trout the next year will always be found equal to the very formidable demand. And so it is, and has been apparently ever since the time of Robert Bruce, or William the Lion. I should be inclined to gather, however, from riverside traditions and printed statistics, that the catches probably fell off very much about forty years ago, but I can see no sign or find any evidence that they have fallen off since, which is all that matters. At any rate, the above figures speak for themselves, and no pessimistic note is ever heard on these riversides, such as on English mountain rivers, by comparison almost unfished, is so chronic.

The Leader, like all these Border rivers, is fished more with worm than fly by the humbler type of artist, who generally pockets every fish, however small, and yet it flourishes! An angling competition where fifty competitors sit upon camp-stools in a row by a sluggish river watching a float seems quite a reasonable entertainment and not out of harmony with this more sedentary and gregarious form of sport. But to the southern sportsman a competition of fly-fishers ranging for miles through nature's most beautiful and secluded haunts, is generally an abhorred notion. Among companions, to be sure, there may be at times a certain

Black Hill, Lauderdale.

suppressed sense of rivalry in a day together, but the principle of competition is inadmissible and rigidly disclaimed. It spoils trouting. But Scotsmen, though not all, of course, revel in it. The Edinburgh clubs vary, I fancy, in their social ingredients, some consisting of the higher, others of the humbler members of society. Occasionally, I believe, the competition is confined to one river—any unpreserved part of it. At other times the competitors may select any water, provided it is not a private preserve. I think both fly and worm are usually permitted, for the latter in clear water is rated in the north as equally artistic. From the facts here given, the reader may derive the natural impression that with a nation of fishermen these streams would be lined with anglers. But this is really not the case. The working-man may be fairly constant in the evening upon handy water, and on really good days is much in evidence, provided he can get away, which, after all, is not often.

In the first half of a bright September under unfavourable, but by no means impossible conditions, eight miles of the Leader lay almost as unnoticed as a duke's preserve, and I had a few half-days which, if not prolific, were by no means barren, and always delightful for the charm of the river itself and its surroundings. One day about noon, after successfully outwitting a half-pound fish that was rising in an overhung pool beneath the old Lauder pele tower of Whitslade, I espied an angler—a gentleman obviously, with two attendants—coming upstream in the water. I sat down and waited for him in anticipation of those friendly interchanges of current experiences, and such like, that are customary between strangers on the river bank. He was thrashing away, too, at a great rate, and in the apparently careless fashion of a man who has

done his serious work, and is going back to catch a train or trap, for which, on this particular day, there seemed ample reason. "What is the matter with the fish?" he called out as he got within speaking distance.

I said I didn't know, that I had been out since ten and only had half-a-dozen.

"I have been out since eight," he said, "and have only seven." So I thought we were going to have a comfortable chat, particularly as he was a stranger, and on the look-out for local tips. Not a bit of it. He went down into the water again just above me, and flogged away for his very life. He had a man on the bank with a landing net, and another attendant, who proved to be the river watcher; for soon afterwards he caught me up to crave a sight of my ticket (a half-crown one, good for a year). "Who is that gentleman?" I inquired. "Why, that's Mr. B.," with a note of surprise, almost of reproof. "And who is Mr. B.? I suppose he wants to catch the two o'clock train at Lauder."

"Mr. B.! I thocht ye'd hae ken't who he was! He's won the gold medal of the —— club in Edinburgh twice running, and if he wins it the day he keeps it for his ain."

"He's not running for the train, then?"

The watcher thought this a great joke, though it wasn't intended as such.

"Na! na! he won't be awa' frae the river afore nicht, and he's the only member on the Leader, too, the day."

"Where are the others?"

He mentioned several other streams of familiar name within forty miles of Edinburgh, over which they were presumably distributed.

After another half-hour, inspired by the superhuman

energies of the gold medallist, which proved things to be getting worse instead of better, I reeled up and went home, devoutly thankful that I was not entered for a piscatorial Derby and my reputation committed to a breathless ten-hour fight against untoward conditions. Next day in Lauder I met the man who had been carrying the landing net for the Edinburgh champion, and naturally put the inevitable query. The north-east wind, and the glitter of the day had defied all the efforts of even so great an artist, and I learned that only a single fish was the reward of a whole afternoon's labour. But my informant turned out to be the local champion, and, according to his own account, he had arranged a private match with this hero from the metropolis, to which he looked forward with apparently the utmost confidence.

Down in the leafy depths below, towards Earlston as I have said, lies Carolside. A modern house, but on the site of an old one, it is surrounded by gardens of some repute, while the Leader races along the foot of the well-timbered sloping park, overhung on its further side by red sandstone cliffs, feathered by wild woods. Back in the hills on the Berwickshire side, and reached by a steep road, is Ledgerwood, familiar to antiquarians for the Late Norman chancel still embodied in the present kirk. My own acquaintance with this interesting uplifted corner had been already made under the pleasant and illuminating auspices of the Berwickshire and Northumberland Natural History and Antiquarian Society. It rained steadily, however, and with no little vigour, for a good part of the day. Philosophy and zeal were both required on the part of the members of both sexes, and were not, I think, found wanting. The landscape was a wet blur, but the Norman chancel arch, and some interesting old

mortuary inscriptions and other details were at least under cover. Keeping the rain out and the heart up, in a full brake on a wet day, when the open country is the chief *raison d'être* of an expedition, is a true test of umbrellas, waterproofs, and philosophy. But, at any rate, a company neither wet nor despondent sat down afterwards to dinner at the hotel at Earlston. A

Corsbie Tower.

half mile below Ledgerwood church, in a marshy flat that once made a virtual island of the green knoll on which it stands, is Corsbie Tower, an old pele of the Cranstouns, who, it will be remembered, assisted at the wiping out of the last active Lauder of Lauder. And reverting once more to that notable family, Carolside seems to have been actually the last spot owned by any of them in Lauderdale. An eccentric old gentleman, says a recent historian of the family, well known

in Edinburgh, where he mainly lived, as Beau Lauder, wore garments so belated in fashion as to be the sport and joy of the city gamins, who dogged his steps. For long after such decorative apparel had died out, the cocked hat, scarlet coat, laced ruffles, silk stockings, and shoes fastened with gold buckles studded with gems, of Beau Lauder were familiar upon the streets of Edinburgh. But his means, apparently, were not in accord with his gaily-caparisoned exterior. He lived alone, and was accidentally burned to death sitting in his chair in 1793, thus extinguishing the last family links with Lauderdale.

At Earlston, the narrow valley of the Leader opens for a short space, and the little town lies pleasantly above the river, where the road and railroad from Gordon, Duns, and elsewhere come through an opening in the hills. Earlston has little of the external quaintness of Lauder, and, being on a through railroad, and near things, and doubtless busier, has probably few of those archaic characteristics which make the other a place unto itself. But Earlston has a *genius loci* of very high distinction, in the shade of Thomas of Earceldoun (an old name for Earlston), better known as Thomas the Rhymour; and what is more, the very thirteenth-century stone building now smothered in ivy, which formed his residence, still stands conspicuous for all to see.

Concerning Thomas the Rhymour, his poetry, his prophecies, and the mysteries associated with his name, Sir Walter Scott, in the *Minstrelsy*, gives practically all the known historical facts. His period trenched so closely on that of Wallace, Bruce, and Edward I., that he apparently foresaw the coming dangers to Scotland. A Saxon in a North Saxon land, he is supposed to have absorbed the old Arthurian Cymric legends, and to have

applied them more or less to the situation of the Lowland Scots, threatened by the power of Edward I. In his lifetime he was regarded as a seer, and at his death prophecy and its fulfilment were freely attributed to him. He is thought to be the author of *Sir Tristrem*, a version of the Cymric legend, best known in the form of *Tristrem and Yseult.* It is written in the North Saxon vernacular, and is one of the earliest, if not the earliest, specimens of English style. The fragments of poetry attributed to the Rhymour deal with mystery and adventure, and in descriptions of Nature, both in her summer dress and in her savage and weird aspects. He was spirited away by an amorous Queen of the Fairies, with whom he dallied for a long period in fairyland, which gave his utterances and prophecies naturally greater weight. He is mentioned by several writers of immediately succeeding generations, and it seems that his wraith had the credit of wandering about amid the scenes in Lauderdale where he had walked and written so much in life. In short, there is a curious blend of undoubted authenticity and mystery about the man and his works, and they have been always an attractive subject for speculation and controversy. Among other things, his predictions as to the union of the crowns were freely quoted, much as were those of the early Welsh bards foretelling the settlement of Anglo-Welsh animosities by the succession of a Welsh prince to the throne.

Still onward between the two counties, through beautiful and woody depths with sloping timbered parks and pastures, and bosky steeps, shooting up into lofty, and here even rugged hills, the Leader for these last four miles pursues its resounding course. Much of it runs through the estate made familiar by the well-known Scottish ballad "The broom of the Cowden

knowes," which together with that of "Leader haughs and Yarrow," was written by Crawford 200 years ago. The high road winding along the breast of the hill above towards the Tweed and Melrose affords a continuous view of what is, perhaps, the most striking bit of Lauderdale, with the Black hill lifting its pointed cap a thousand feet above.

Both the Leader and the highway, the one to deliver its tribute, the other to mount a noble old stone bridge, join the Tweed within almost a stone's-throw of one another. It is a fitting place to end our journey. For the downward prospect from the many-arched stone bridge of the broad shallows of the greater river into which the Leader rushes out of her woody depths is a scene well worthy to be numbered among the fairest we have wandered in all these chapters. I may fairly leave my reader to cross the Tweed under other auspices into the Scott country, and into scenes celebrated by pens innumerable. The scheme of my modest intentions ends abruptly here at Leaderfoot. Hitherto we have not often trodden upon soil, whether plain or mountain, that is ever pressed by the foot of alien travellers, or that the outer world, speaking generally, knows anything about. Across this bridge, however, the situation wholly changes. Up to its first arch my conscience is in this respect tolerably at ease. The bridge at Leaderfoot might almost stand for the Rubicon between the known and the unknown. Beyond it both our pen and pencil would most assuredly lose such justification as I have ventured to proffer for them. A sense of the fitness of things, so far as this and our pleasant labours are concerned, calls here for an abrupt halt, and none too soon, for the limitations of space to which I had proposed to confine these chapters. Just beyond, the Eildon Hills with their

Leaderfoot Bridge over Tweed.

sharp peaks rise high into the sky. Melrose, Abbotsford, and Dryburgh are all close at hand. And there are further changes, too, of another and assuredly less pleasant kind, as you cross over from the seclusion of Lauderdale into the Scott country. Nothing, to be sure, has sullied the reposeful seclusion of Dryburgh, the stately ruins of Melrose, or the suggestive charm of Abbotsford within their several bounds. But villas, hotels, and hydros, the dust of brakes, motors, and hired traps, the going and coming of tourists from many lands, make their immediate neighbourhood seem almost like another world to any one coming suddenly out of the quiet local life of the Merse, the Lammermoors, East Lothian, and Lauderdale.

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